

Wesleyan Advocate Pulpit

Series of 1905

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PREFACE.

Some months ago, in a meeting of editors held in a Southern city, a representative of one of the most widely circulated and influential secular papers in this country said, that the sermon carried each week by the journal with which he was connected was at once its most popular and useful feature. The world wants to follow the thought of the religious thinkers of the age. If a secular newspaper finds the sermon feature both popular and useful, why should the avowedly religious journal ignore it, or lay it aside?

Believing that the people should find in a religious paper the response to an evident demand for the printed sermon, the Wesleyan Christian Advocate Pulpit was established in 1904, and some of the most eminent ministers and distinguished laymen in American Methodism were invited to occupy it. The responses to the invitation were generous, and a very unusual series of sermons was laid before our readers during that year. These were afterward put in permanent book form, constituting the Wesleyan Advocate Pulpit of 1904—a rare volume of homiletical as well as of spiritual force and value.

The Wesleyan Pulpit was still open in 1905, and other ministers were invited to occupy it, the selection this

time being largely from men in the pastorate, and more local in their reputation.

The series of 1905 is now given forth to the public—not inferior in every essential feature to that of 1904.

The range of topics, as a cursory glance at the table of contents will show, is wide in its compass, many phases of religious and theological truths are presented to the reader, and beneath every discussion is to be discovered a pronounced and positive spiritual life in the preacher. There are no mere theorizers in this group of preachers. They speak out of experience of the things of God and on intensely practical themes.

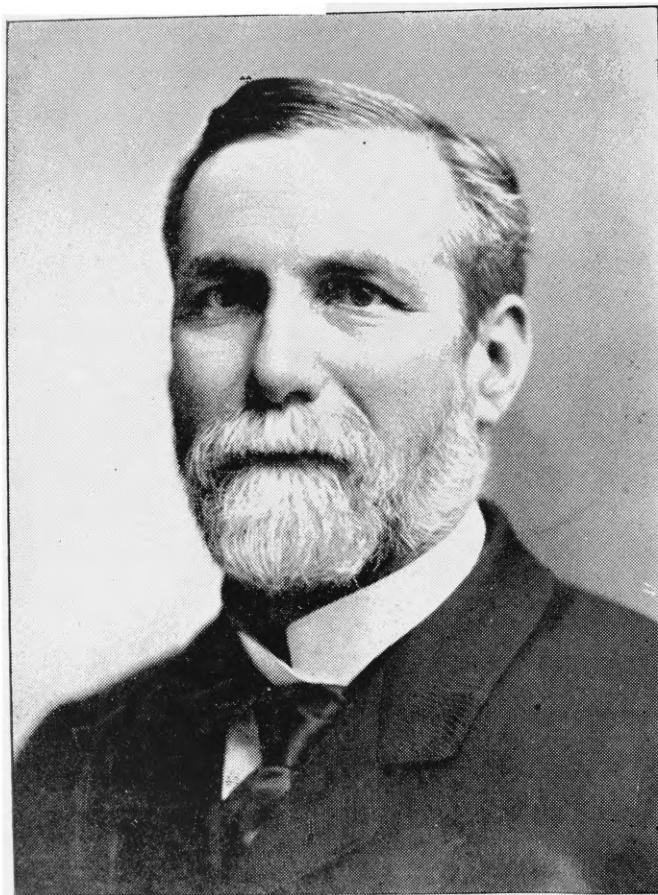
The generous reception given the series of 1904 encourages the assurance that this series of 1905 will find a like ready acceptance on the part of the readers of the Wesleyan Advocate.

The tardiness with which the book goes forth—it was the purpose to bring it out earlier—is regretted, but has been unavoidable.

Assured that the thinker and the Christian will find in the Wesleyan Pulpit for 1905 that which will broaden his mind, encourage his faith, and stimulate his zeal in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, we now send it forth with our prayers for its largest usefulness.

W. C. LOVETT,
Editor.

M. J. COFER,
Asst. Editor and Bus. Mgr.



BISHOP CHARLES B. GALLOWAY, D.D.,
Of Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

Eloquent Tribute to a Great Man.

We are glad to present to our readers the eloquent funeral address of Bishop Galloway, delivered in the Carrollton Avenue Methodist Church, New Orleans, La., on Sunday afternoon, January 21st, as a tribute to the life and character of Bishop John Christian Keener. Such a portraiture of a great character cannot fail to furnish to all who read it inspiration to a nobler and better life.

As this is the Missionary issue of the Wesleyan Christian Advocate, it is not inappropriate that the founder of our mission work in Mexico—one of the greatest works of Bishop Keener's long and useful life, should have the emphasis of Bishop Galloway's admirably uttered tribute. Remembering the great achievements of the living is no insignificant honor to their memory after they have gone from us. Bishop Keener believed in the great commission of Jesus Christ, and he was a magnificent leader of his Church in missionary enterprise and achievement.—(Ed. W. C. A.)

Funeral of Bishop John C. Keener

Bishop Galloway's Tribute.

We bury today one of the most remarkable men in all the annals of the Southwest. An ecclesiastical leader of rare gifts and vast influence, a preacher of apostolic spirit and power, and an eminent citizen of passionate patriotism and undaunted heroism, he made for himself a large but unique place in the story of his times. There was a charm in the originality of his genius and an awe in the grandeur of his character, and a splendor in the power of his personality and a flavor in the quaintness of his humor and a surprise in the vastness and variety of his public services that together produced a man worthy of high place in America's Hall of Fame. There were some notes in the psalm of his life that rarely fall upon the ear of the world. There are some lessons in the toil and triumphs of his great soul that will make him an inspiration to every generation of reverent and aspiring spirits. We had nothing like him. In many respects he dwelt apart—a star of the first magnitude—a genius without genealogy. The sudden going away of this remarkable man—our venerable and venerated father in Israel—gives us all a strange sense of orphanage. We were accustomed to seek his counsel and lis-

ten for his voice. Though for several years he had retired from active superintendency in the Church, we had his inspiring presence and felt the touch of his steady and guiding hand.

Most of Bishop Keener's great life was bound up with this city of New Orleans. Into the texture of its very being he wrought his noble history. He mixed his richest blood in the mortar that cemented the stones of its vast structure from deep foundation to lofty dome.

This was the scene of his hardest toils and his greatest triumphs—his deepest sorrows and his highest joys. Here were his most sacred treasures, and here his own ashes should gently rest.

A Conspicuous Figure.

During the past fifty years the two most conspicuous figures in the pulpit of New Orleans were Dr. B. M. Palmer and Bishop John C. Keener. Differing widely in their superb gifts and distinguishing characteristics, yet strikingly alike in most of the qualities that gave each greatness and the virtues that make them immortal, they would have been premiers in any cabinet, leaders of any host, stars of the first magnitude in any skies. For fifty years they fought and wrought together in the same city of their brotherly love, and through the eternities they will rejoice together in that other city, without foundations, whose walls are jasper and whose streets are pure gold.

Nearly sixty years ago two young itinerant Methodist preachers were sent to the city of New Orleans to take

up the work which had tested the fiber and almost broken the heart of other apostolic men. They were cultured, consecrated young men, whose faith had never been weakened by bitter reverses and whose courage had never been foiled in life's fierce battle. They were full of hope and high resolve. One was a graduate of Wesleyan University, at Middletown, Conn., with the impress of Wilbur Fisk upon his strong character; the other a graduate of Randolph-Macon College, with the name of Landon C. Garland on his diploma. One was John C. Keener, the other was Holland N. McTyeire. Both became historic men. Both were editors of the New Orleans Christian Advocate, and both were bishops of conspicuous ability and commanding influence. Closely united in their confidential friendships and connectional responsibilities, they must be near each other in the companionship of the skies.

Of this honored colleague and his self-sacrificing labors in this city, Bishop McTyeire thus wrote in his "History of Methodism:"

"The systematic and comprehensive plans laid and carried by Dr. John C. Keener date an epoch in the present New Orleans Methodism. He was appointed by Bishop Paine pastor of Poydras Street Church in 1848; met the yellow fever and outlived it in 1849, and has since resided in the city, a witness, and under God, the chief director of the prosperous condition of its Methodism."

Really Great Life.

It is not my purpose to give even in outline the eloquent story of a long and really great life, or follow the

triumphal steps of a brilliant history. In those glorious fourscore years and seven, there are thrilling facts and historic incidents enough for an immortal volume. Born in Baltimore in 1819, with the richest Teutonic blood in his veins, endowed with genius; educated at Wilbraham, Mass., Middleton, Conn., entering upon business life as a wholesale druggist; called to the ministry, a member of the Alabama Conference; transferred to New Orleans, where he was pastor and presiding elder; chaplain in the Confederate army; editor of the New Orleans Christian Advocate; a bishop of the Church; founder of the missions in Mexico, and the inspiring advocate or strong leader of all our great connectional enterprises, are the bare facts of wellnigh a century. Through all those eventful years he was everywhere conspicuous and always distinguished.

Not the story of a great life will I attempt to give at this solemn hour, but some estimate of a masterful man. There are lessons in that apostolic career worthy of all emulation.

His life embraced the most tempestuous period of our ecclesiastical and national history, and for fifty years he was a conspicuous actor therein. The year after he entered the ministry in Alabama the memorable General Conference of 1844 was held. Then came years of contention and litigation, followed by four years of war; these to be succeeded by the bitter period of reconstruction. Happily before the hour of his going the era of peace had dawned with a spirit of reunion in the nation, and of fraternity and federation in the Church.

A few of the characteristics which so strikingly distinguished this great man I venture to recount. He was

a majestic personality. His massive frame was a fitting home for his stalwart character. In all his physical as well as mental movements he had the tread of a giant and the stride of a commander. His very appearance was suggestive of serious purpose and rugged honesty and fearless courage. As he so graphically described Bishop Joshua Soule, the Wellington of American Methodism, and his ecclesiastical prototype, so may we say of Bishop John C. Keener—his was a character of colossal proportions, grand without infirmities.

There was strength in every sinew and steel in every nerve, and iron in every drop of blood. He had the head of a Roman Senator. His wonderful face, a study for artists; suggestive of genius and a revelation of granite character, who can ever forget it? His large hand was made to wield the battle ax of Richard, rather than the light sword of Saladin. There was authority in the tones of his voice, and majesty in the sweep of the imperial thought.

In all his movements he reminded me of some great ocean liner, walking the seas with as firm a tread when lashed into fury by a storm as when placidly shimmering like a leaf under a cloudless starlit sky.

He did everything grandly, whether preaching to a vast congregation on some majestic theme, or delivering a missionary address on some notable occasion, or officially presiding over some high senate of the Church, or expounding some constitutional principle or policy in the councils of his colleagues, or driving an ox team over the prairies into Texas during the war, with his family, to escape the Federal armies. He could not do or say a commonplace thing. I doubt if Bishop Keener

ever entered any company, whether Conference or convention or congregation, that he was not instantly and universally accorded a chief seat.

When shall we look again upon such a towering personality? His very presence stirred every sentiment of the sublime. He made one think on high themes and turn his eye upward toward the shining summits. His was the majesty of a mountain, scarred, it may be, from summit to granite base, but unshaken in its deep foundations, and calmly oblivious of every storm and scudding cloud.

Another distinguished quality of this masterful man was his decision of character. A man of his positive nature could not long remain in doubt or suspense about anything that involved personal conduct or character. However patient and painstaking the processes of his investigations, when conclusions were reached they were clear cut and final. From them he rarely ever took appeal and not often found occasion for reargument. Never hasty in judgment, it was not easy to revise well-formed opinion. He knew his own mind, and others could not fail to understand him. Positive in conviction, he was emphatic in statement if not dogmatic in utterance. Nobody ever thought of him as a man in soft raiment or as a reed shaken by the wind. He wore the garb of a spiritual and mental mountaineer, and the authoritative notes of his silver trumpet rang out loud and clear on the morning air. There was nothing in him of the Brother Pliable. He was little affected by the size or noise of the multitude. His conclusions had been reached without regard to their popularity—their acceptance or rejection by others. He loved the con-

fidence and approval of his brethren, but would not sacrifice a conviction or surrender an honest judgment in order to secure it.

But, while tenacious of opinion, he was not intolerant in spirit. Indeed, he had respect, even to admiration, for those who differed with him if their views were strongly supported.

On one occasion, discussing in his own masterly and philosophical way that mystical character of the far-away time, he said: "Job always fought in a dark room." So, alone with God and in the solemn councils of his own great intellect, did this mighty man solve the problems of life and work out the basal principles to which his eternal hopes were securely anchored. That gave him calm confidence and clear decision and unshaken purpose.

One of his well-known and most striking characteristics was his inflexibility of purpose. He had an imperial will that no discouragements could daunt and no obstacles could thwart. It seemed to challenge impossibilities. He appeared a stranger to discouragement and innocent of the sense of despair. If defeated, he never knew it, or refused to acknowledge it. That gave him a Napoleonic courage in the prosecution of an enterprise that compelled admiration of the man if not approval of his plans. When the night was darkest, he proclaimed with loudest voice his unshaken faith in a more hopeful morning. Before the ashes of war had cooled, standing amidst the smoking and tumultuous ruins of fire and tempest, he sounded a trumpet and announced the resurrection of our Southern Methodism.

And this same spirit he carried into every cause he espoused and every duty he discharged. If he saw any lions in his path, he never ran from them or walked around them.

Bishop Keener was an ecclesiastical statesman of rare prescience and high courage, but of a most pronounced and aggressively conservative type. He had scant patience with any suggested change that did not assure improvement. For mere experiments in legislation he had instinctive antagonism. The Discipline under which the fathers wrought such mighty things he thought should be handled with great care. Only less sacred to him than the ark of God was the Discipline of his Church. While in no sense an idolator of the past, he would not surrender in any measure the wisdom of which had been so marvelously vindicated by unexampled success. The great constitutional safeguards of our polity he watched with a sleepless and godly jealousy.

Excessive Conservatism.

No doubt his highest efficiency as a great ecclesiastical leader was sometimes seriously affected by his excessive conservatism. We can not undervalue the pressing needs and inevitable changes of the growing years. To recognize things and adjust our legislation and administration thereto is the demand of wisdom and the logic of history.

But we can not withhold admiration for one who stands for something. In these days of a shifting expediency and a nimble diplomacy and knight-errancy, it

is at once refreshing and inspiring to feel the sturdy strength and independence of a man.

In this last address to the General Conference he reaffirmed with emphasis his adherence to our great ecclesiastical polity in these words:

"Having had opportunity for so long a time to know and estimate our connectional system, I wish to record my testimony to its value—a system that places a pastor in every Church and provides a Church for every pastor; that penetrates every neighborhood, preaches at every cross-roads, builds a Church in every village, and reaches from the Atlantic to the Pacific, keeps up with the pioneer, and includes the Indian reservations; a system in which thousands of ministers are annually appointed to go and none refuse, often going to a work with only a name, and financially naked as a rock, but returning in a year with sheaves of precious converts, a circuit established, a Church and parsonage built. Such a patriarchal military system could only have been the outgrowth of the divine influence that made Mr. Wesley the spiritual father of his people and guided him in shaping connectional Methodism, which he held to be as essential for efficiency as the doctrines which he preached."

Bishop Keener was passionately devoted to the section in which his long and noble life was spent. He was intensely and aggressively Southern in every fiber of his being. Though born in Baltimore and educated in New England, his profoundest sympathies were with the social and political and ecclesiastical ideals of the far South. And to the end of his long and checkered life that devotion never knew the slightest变ableness or

shadow of turning. On the issues that first divided the Church, and then the nation, his opinions became his deepest convictions, and these convictions were but slightly affected by the lapse of years.

For personal injuries he never harbored resentment, but for wrongs against a cause or a people he allowed small room for repentance and had little hope of amendment. While, doubtless, he recognized a Providence in the results of our Civil War, and rejoiced in a restored peace and reunited country, he resented the slightest imputation upon the motives of his people, and never apologized for a single act; and in these intense convictions he was, if possible, more firmly fixed by the agonies and horrors of reconstruction in the South.

He was a man of marvelously brilliant gifts—gifts that would have distinguished him in any land or age of the world. His genius was many-sided, and each flashed with a splendor all its own. He had poetic genius, without the technique of the poet. Undoubtedly the divine afflatus was his. Many of his sermons were prose poems, and all his utterances betokened a soul into whom the muses had sung. And yet he possessed a philosophic cast of mind. The grasp and sweep of his thought indicated a man who was acquainted with Grove and Academy.

And who could ever forget the brilliancy of his wit or the sparkle of his humor? Had he not restrained it, he might have rivaled the best things of Sydney Smith or Jonathan Swift.

He had a strangely alert and eager mind that continued its search for knowledge up to the day of his going away. Like the great Mr. Gladstone, who at

eighty-six issued an annotated edition of Butler's *Analogy* and wrote metrical translations of Homer, this veteran of the South, displayed all the mental alertness and eagerness of his ardent young manhood. He prepared two volumes for the press and imported the freshest books from foreign shores.

As an author he won enduring fame. In earlier life he wrote a book that has become a Methodist classic, and will so remain as long as covetousness is to be scourged and the stewardship of wealth needs a conscience. Had he never written another line, the author of "Post Oak Circuit" would be accorded a high place among the leaders of modern Christian thought.

A Great Preacher.

Bishop Keener was a great preacher—one of the greatest I ever heard—though not what is known as a popular preacher. He lacked those histrionic talents that please the multitude, and was too serious a soul to amuse the galleries. He was a man with a message, and often spoke with a tongue of flame. He only discussed great themes—doctrines that were vital and eternal. Those who ever heard his great sermons on the "Temptation of Jesus," the "Resurrection," the "Transfiguration," or on "Ezekiel's Vision of the Valley of Dry Bones," can never forget his masterly deliverances and their profound impression.

A Bishop.

At the General Conference of 1870 he was elected to the high office of a Bishop in the Church of God. In

that exalted position his genius shone with an unwonted brilliancy, and in the discharge of its sacred duties his great name will reach most undying fame.

For twenty-eight active years he bore its heavy burdens and met its exacting and multifarious responsibilities with ability and conspicuous fidelity that demonstrated his worthiness to be a successor of the apostolic men whose names he cherished and whose illustrious examples he daily emulated. He had the missionary fervor of Francis Asbury, the rigid adherence to constitutional law of William McKendree and the consistent and persistent conservatism of Joshua Soule. He magnified his apostolic office.

Throughout the Church his powerful leadership was everywhere felt. And many a long year will come and go before the silvery echoes of his mighty voice will die upon the ear of American Methodism.

However much any of us may have differed in judgment with Bishop Keener as to the wisdom of any official act or connectional policy, of one thing there was never a dissenting opinion—first and foremost he placed the interests of the Church. He never had any personal ends to serve or personal ambitions to subserve. All his concern was for the apostolic Church, which was to him dearer than life. As one of his junior colleagues, grateful for a thousand courtesies, helped often by his wise counsel and inspirited by his unremitting and unselfish labors for the Church, I lay a flower of love upon his honored grave.

Deeply Spiritual Man.

But above all and best of all, Bishop Keener was a deeply spiritual man. He knew by a wonderful experience the secret of the Lord. Into the highest mysteries of the spirit world possible to a soul in this mortal life he had been graciously introduced, and with them he had large and intimate acquaintance.

He dwelt much in the realm of the unseen and communed freely with the Spirit of the living God. In his sublimely beautiful farewell address to the General Conference—his last will and testament to the Church—he disclosed the depths of his own spiritual life in these wise words:

“The new birth is the keystone of Wesleyan doctrine. This is that ‘scriptural holiness’ which Mr. Wesley sought to spread throughout England and America—that ‘the Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit; that we are the children of God;’ that ‘as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.’ My brethren, let nothing divert you from preaching this great law of life: ‘Except a man be born again he can not see the kingdom of God.’ Put men in the guidance of the Holy Spirit and He will see to the rest. He will lead them through green pastures, beside still waters; He will

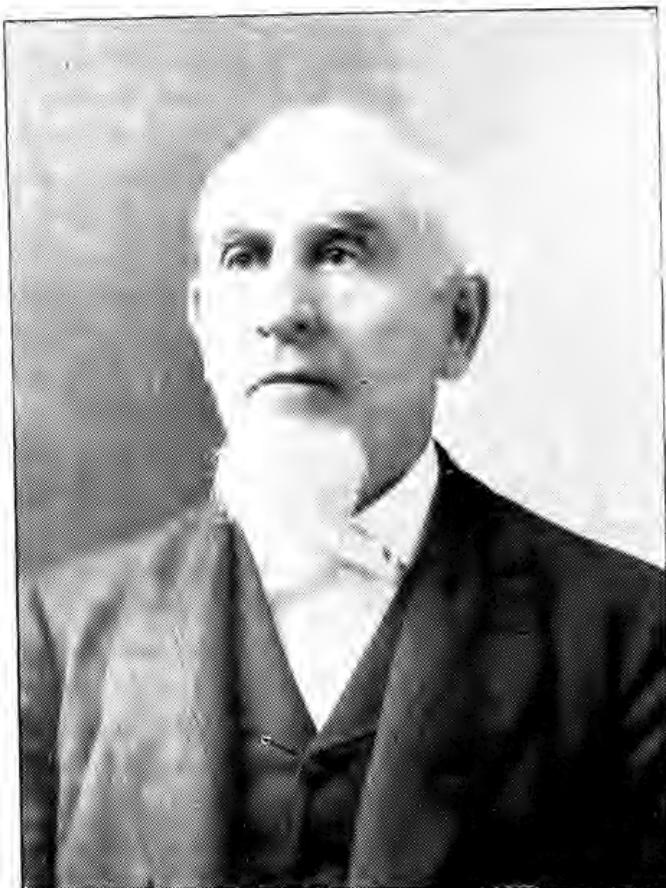
“ ‘Make them for some moments feast
With Jesus’ priests and kings.’ ”

His home life was beautiful. Within that sacred circle there was the genial warmth and sweet unrestraint

of affectionate confidence. There the dignified official presiding over ecclesiastical councils and the great preacher speaking with the sternness of a Hebrew prophet, and again with the passionate pleading of an apostle, gave way to the gentle, confiding, companionable husband and father. I never saw anything more beautiful than this venerable man of eighty years showing the same knightly attention to the mother of his children as when, more than fifty years before, he proudly led her to the bridal altar.

The End.

His end came no doubt as he would have preferred—quietly, in the afternoon of a beautiful day. For a long time he had been sitting at the gate watching the coming twilight shadows, ready to go with the going down of the sun. Every preparation had been made for the journey—even the hymns selected for this impressive service—so he stepped into the celestial chariot and went home to God. In his modest cottage home where he had lived so many beautiful years, near the slow-moving tides of our greatest river, he sweetly fell asleep, to awake on the bank of that other stream, clear as crystal, that flows near the throne of the King.



REV. PAUL WHITEHEAD, D.D.,
Virginia Conference.

SERMON II.

A DEPLORABLE EXCEPTION.

By REV PAUL WHITEHEAD, D. D.

A Deplorable Exception.

Text: 1 Kings 15:5 (latter part)—“Save only in the matter of Uriah the Hittite.”

The historian, whose name we have no means of ascertaining, was evidently a great admirer of King David. He here ascribes to the Divine favor towards David the providential mercy his descendants through several successive generations, who, despite their personal faults and lack of capacity, were allowed to retain the throne of Judah. In this sense, God gave David “a light” to shine in the house of His kingdom along the line of descent. Such favor he obtained by faithful service of his God from his youth up, turning “not aside from anything that God commanded him all the days of his life—.” But truth and candor will not suffer him to leave the sentence finished thus; he is obliged to add the words of the text, “Save only in the matter of Uriah the Hittite.”

Terrible exception! Dreadful, lamentable, disgraceful. Who shall measure all of pain, humiliation, evil that is contained in this short addendum to what had otherwise been an incomparable record? The sad and disgraceful story, referred to in these words of exception, has been “a stone of stumbling” to many readers of the Old Testament.

Good men have asked themselves such questions as these: Was David ever a good man at all? Had he been, could he have fallen so foully and horribly? Could such a sin ever receive forgiveness? Is a transgression like that pardonable? Hath it ever forgiveness in this world or the world to come? And, if it were forgiven through the amazing riches of God's mercy or long-suffering, could the offender have been restored to the divine favor in the sense of being allowed to be a leader among the saints and to take part in public acts as a representative of God's worship and service?

To all such questions a candid reader of the Scriptures must return affirmative answers. David was undoubtedly a good man before committing this enormous sin. Yea, he was probably, on the whole, the best man of his day; surely among the very best of that generation. Previous blemishes on his record are indeed like spots on the sun. He fell foully and horribly; from a high estate of pure living and communion with God, he descended into the unclean and bloody depths of adultery and murder. Yet he was pardoned. Nathan expressly said: "The Lord also hath put away thy sin."

The heart-broken petitions of the fifty-first Psalm were answered in the blotting out of his sin and in God's hiding His face from the iniquity which burdened the soul of the transgressor. And he was permitted once more to stand among holy men and take a foremost part in God's service. We know not to what extent his fall was known to the Israelitish public. Nathan's words, "For thou didst it secretly" (2 Sam. 12:12), may mean that even then, beyond suspicions and rumors, the real truth of the case was known to few. But though with humbled crest and "walking softly" for the rest

of his days, David did not cast off his worship of the Lord nor shirk any of the duties and responsibilities toward God of his kingly position at the head of the chosen nation. And to me it seems, that he bears himself with stronger faith (for example, in the pathetic flight from Jerusalem to Mahanaim), born of an unfeigned humility and a broken-hearted recognition of the divine love in the scourgings of Providence, than in his earlier days. Living or dying, come weal or woe, he is Jehovah's—once more His forgiven child, washed and sanctified.

What lessons of instruction does such a passage as the text bring us? Some of them may, at first hearing, seem unexpected, but I trust they will all be edifying.

I. The possibility of perfection: comparative, relative perfection of life. It need not have been that the history of David's life, to be truly written, should have contained this deplorable blot mentioned in the text. How glorious if David's career could have been, truthfully summed up, as this verse reads, without the exception of the text. He might have compared worthily with any Old Testament saint; with Moses or Daniel or Elijah.

And this might have been; it was perfectly possible. No man can truly say that this sin could not have been avoided; so that neither the seduction of Bathsheba nor the murder of Uriah should have defiled the conscience of David.

Some will have it that all men sin and that continually; the best of men in their best actions. But surely this is a gross exaggeration growing out of over-strained definitions of sin. Talking soberly, without morbid and unnatural distortions of this kind, we speak of men living through life, as Paul says of the behavior of himself

and his comrades among the Thessalonians (1 Thess. 2:10), "holily, justly and unblameably."

Another false notion on this subject is that some men cannot resist particular temptations. Paul overthrows this error by the deliverance in 1 Cor. 10:13, "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape that ye may be able to bear it."

That David might have kept himself pure is established by the case of Joseph's temptation, recorded Genesis 39:7-12. When we compare the cases, we see that all the advantage, for resistance, was on David's side. Joseph was unmarried and young; at the age when the animal desires are strongest and ungratified appetite clamors loudly for indulgence. David was a husband and middle-aged, with no uncurbed lusts raging in his blood; with all the ordinary powers of reflection and self-control in full exercise. The opportunity of concealment in Joseph's case was complete; the danger of exposure and the peril of detection reduced to the minimum. David, on the contrary, risked a kingdom and a crown for a brief pleasure, and was compelled to employ go-betweens who might betray him at any hour. Moreover, the consequences of his sin lurked for him to drag him onward to worse iniquity, in which, as before, he was to have accomplices upon whose discretion his very life might hang. Joseph was a slave; the suggestion might easily come to him, "What difference does it make what I may do? Who cares for my soul or my redemption? Why should I refrain from any course to maintain a good name or be faithful to a

master?" David was a king—the head of the state as well as of a family; his example and spirit, if bad, might infect and ruin the whole people. If he would not fear God, he might well have regard to his good name and the welfare of his subjects. Joseph's power to resist came from looking upward to God, as it were into His very face. "How can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?" David looked downward from his palace roof, through the windows of lustful imagination into the purlieus of pleasurable pollution. After that look he was a fallen man. Oh, if that had never been!

Let us appeal to every hearer to set the standard of life high. Aim, with full purpose of heart, to live a life "in every thought renewed." Not to be as good as the average man; least of all, to be not so bad as the worst; but to be as good as any man can be "through grace and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ." Especially do I appeal to the young to begin thus; with the highest aspirations, noblest ideals, groanings after perfection, content with nothing below the holiest and best.

2. The best man may fall, and fall foully and dreadfully. "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall" (1 Corin. 10:12). To be spiritually proud, self-conceited, saying, "Is thy servant a dog that he should do such a thing?" is the "pride" which "goeth before destruction." Be one ever so sure of acceptance with God, there is no security from temptation and fall, even a grievous fall, save "watching unto prayer." "Take heed lest" you "fall"; and your foot may be slipping while you say to yourself, "peace and safety." When a man thinks that he has risen above tempta-

tion, no longer feels or is liable to feel the great adversary's onslaught, he is in special danger. There are no bomb-proofs absolutely safe against the assaults of Satan, this side of glory. The history of human life is full of distressing illustrations of this truth. The sea of being and action here is strewn with wrecks of vessels which nobody expected to founder in any storm. Charles Wesley has given us a stanza which it will be well for us to commit to memory and often use in praying without ceasing:

"Pierce, fill me with an humble fear!
My utter helplessness reveal!
Satan and sin are always near;
Thee may I always nearer feel!"

Able with Christ Jesus helping us to "do all things" in the resistance of evil as well as the performance of duty, without Him we "can do nothing;" we are "weaker than a bruised reed" in the storm of temptation.

The doctrine that a true child of God cannot totally and finally fall from Him, even if it were true, is so liable to fatal abuse that it should be preached by those who hold it with the greatest carefulness. It is logically inconsistent with any reasonable and free-working doctrine of assurance. Knowledge of sins forgiven and of being born again must be unattainable; the best that any man can reach being a hope tremulous with fear, that it may turn out, in the eternal day, that he was truly born of God. Among illiterate and ignorant people, the final perseverance of the saints, if connected (as it often is among our colored people in the South) with the notion that water-baptism is regeneration, may

become a very “doctrine of devils,” full of the evil effects of delusion to the mind and looseness in practical living.

Similar in effect, to some extent, may be the notion that advanced progress in the divine life and great pourings out of the Holy Ghost upon a human soul may and will result in such elevation above temptation that nothing within us will, in any degree, lean towards the suggestion of evil, which will then be like a shell exploding outside a perfect fort structure, able to make a noise but not to do harm. The Apostle James, however, says, (James 1:14) that “every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust (or desire) and enticed.” Temptation is this drawing away and enticing by our “own desire.” Surely our desires are “within” us; they are in the very fibre of our being. Whatever does not excite them to draw away and entice does not tempt. If unwatchful and unprayerful, and above all, if puffed up by such a sense of security as to be off his guard, the best man (up to that hour) may be drawn away, as David was, and be undone. Exposed to the shafts of the Devil, a bow “drawn at a venture” may send an arrow which shall pierce between the joints of the harness. Thus in earthly warfare fell Ahab at Ramoth Gilead. Thus in spiritual battle fell David, theretofore so high and good, pierced on the battlement of his palace.

3. The worst sin may be forgiven; the worst fall may be recovered from. When we ponder this evil deed of David’s, we may well ask, “Was there ever anything worse?” In the lurid light of Nathan’s parable of the poor man’s ewe lamb, taken and killed by the rich man as food for his guest, it is not wonderful that David

was entrapped into fierce anger and sentence of death against his own sin. The greater wonder is that he had been able to look Nathan or any other holy man in the face. He had committed adultery; "despised the express commandment of the Lord" on that subject and set himself on the side of "whoremongers and adulterers" whom "God will judge." So far as the unhappy woman herself was concerned, he had saved her from public disgrace and punishment and made tardy reparation as well as he could; but at what cost to his own soul! For to do this, he had plunged into "blood-guiltiness"; had "killed Uriah the Hittite", not openly by a blow of revenge or hatred, face to face, but in the most base and cowardly manner, "with the sword of the children of Ammon." Few things in the old sacred books are more touching than the picture of Uriah's stalwart disregard for luxurious ease and home comforts because his war comrades were in the open fields; blind to David's trickery, blind in his loyalty and his soldier-bearing. And how our hearts bleed over his fate when he goes back to camp to die, apparently, in the glory of the forefront of the hottest battle for his king and country, as a soldier loves to die, if die he must, but in reality betrayed by his king and general to an undeserved fate, forsaken and purposely left to be overwhelmed by the foes of Jehovah and Israel! Ah! therefore well says the historian—not "in the matter of Bathsheba," but "in the matter of Uriah the Hittite," poor, murdered, brave Uriah, fighting hopelessly to the last, unwitting of the plot to destroy him.

Possibly no man ever went nearer to the door of perdition, not to go in, than this wretched royal sinner. We have no record of the workings of his mind

and heart during the long period of this awful lapse from God and good. His own summing up, in response to Nathan, is simply, "I have sinned against the Lord;" and then, as if that awful thought "against the Lord"—against the impersonation of Perfect Purity, Goodness, Love and Righteousness—against Supreme Power and Glory as well as Omniscience—had struck him dumb—he can say no more. In the penitent Psalm, in which he poured out his soul before God, when Nathan was gone back to his house, this thought is expressed, "Against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned and done this evil in Thy sight;" as if he forgot, for the time, poor murdered Uriah, the polluted wife, his own family and station, the uplifted Hand of God which could take vengeance for his crimes.

One may ask why was public record made of this loathsome sin? Why is it on the pages of the Bible, to "smell to Heaven" in the reading of all generations of God's people? Would it not have been better to leave it unknown, along with so many awful sins and offenses which smoulder in the darkness till the Light of Judgment shall be kindled by the conflagration of the world?

Perhaps the most reasonable answer to such a question is, that it was to make yet more sure the promise of mercy to the worst offender who shall repent of his sins. "Some forlorn and shipwrecked" sinner wandering through the world, loaded down with sin and crushed by guilt and self-condemnation, would not dare to apply to himself the general promises of pardon to the guilty who shall turn from evil. But he reads this case; he puts himself in David's place; he is moved and touched by the narration of the divine compassion and grace.

He turns with new interest and fresh hope to the words of our Lord Jesus Christ: "Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men." (Matt. 12:31). He sees in his own case no aggravation greater than existed in David's. He could not have fallen from a greater height or to a lower depth. He turns the eye of his despairing spirit to the Cross and mercy of Jesus, the Savior of sinners.

Oh, I rejoice in the liberty and authority which I have as a minister of the Lord Jesus to proclaim release to the worst slaves of corruption in this world; and to assure them, however fallen and unclean, of a full and free pardon sealed with the blood of the Son of God, if only they shall turn from their unrighteousness to a pure life! "Jesus Christ hath power on earth to forgive sins;" "all manner of sins and blasphemies;" iniquities of every sort and degree, from the smallest departure from the line of rectitude to the most heaven-daring crimes and blood-curdling deeds of darkness and cruel lust which were ever committed.

"Drooping souls, no longer grieve!
Heaven is propitious.
If on Jesus you believe,
You will find Him precious!"

"Believe on Him who died for thee,
And sure as He hath died,
Thy debt is paid, thy soul is free
And thou are justified."

One observation remains to be made growing out of this case. Some sins require for their full and proper treatment, human life with its numerous relations, that along with their forgiveness there may go a decree of

providential chastenings and sorrowful visitations; not of the nature of punishment, yet distressful and humiliating, which the evil-doer may connect in his thoughts, always and without doubt, with the pardoned sin. These are medicine, and very bitter!

Said Nathan to David, "Howbeit because by this deed, thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme, the child, also, that is born unto thee, shall surely die." (2 Sam. 12:14). Nor was the fearful language first spoken, "Now, therefore, the sword shall never depart from thy house," recalled. Forgiveness turned aside the blade of judgment for personal sin quivering over his head, but not the curse of providential calamity, a sword ever present, in death and sorrow, in his home.

There are sins whose sorrowful and calamitous consequences and accompaniments no contrition or repentance, no, nor forgiveness, and restoration to divine favor can remove here. From the hour when Nathan went back to his own house, this budget of distress and calamity began to be opened. And the reader of the second book of Samuel goes on from chapter to chapter, anticipating the coming of one and another grief and fearful trouble till all culminates in Absalom's rebellion and treason and bloody death.

At length David himself dies; as the chronicler puts it, "in a good old age, full of days, riches and honor" (1 Chronicles 29:28); but he was only seventy, just three-score and ten. At that not extreme age he was "old and stricken with years and they covered him with clothes but he gat no heat" (1 Kings 1:1); natural vitality was at a low ebb. Was not this largely because of the trials and sorrows of the years which followed

his great sin? Culminating in the broken-hearted cry, "O Absalom, my son, my son! Would God I had died for thee!" as he mounted the stairs above the gate at Mahanaim. These had crushed his spirit and broken his bodily strength, until he aged prematurely.

There are, doubtless, cases similar to his in this modern world of humanity. And the thought of it may help to strengthen the soul weakened by temptation and poisoned by the atmosphere of corruption. To such an one, heretofore pure, Satan may have said, "Well; at the worst you can always repent and obtain forgiveness. God is too good to take pleasure in your death. He will pardon the worst sins." True; it may be possible to scale again the facilis descensus Averni down which you will have ventured in pursuit of pleasure, gain or viler good. It is a fearful risk; where one has come back like David, ten have gone over the precipice forever. But you may be able to come back. Yet the sad truth remains; in most cases you lose much that can never be recovered, for which no reward of sin or corrupt enjoyment can compensate. And if saved finally, it will be with "the smell of fire upon the garments." Sad, heart-breaking memories of paths made thorny by your sins and the chastening of the Lord necessary for your rescue will cling, we know not how long, to the soul. The last moments of conscious life may be embittered by such memories. The dying lips may feel the bitter taste of such recollections.



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SERMON III.

THE VEILED GOSPEL.

By REV JOHN J. TIGERT, D.D., LL.D.

The Veiled Gospel.

Text: "If our gospel is veiled, it is veiled in them that are perishing."—2 Cor. iv:3.

Introduction.

So reads the revised version of the third verse of the fourth chapter of Second Corinthians. Bible students will notice two variations from the older reading: "If our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost." Both of these variations are important and highly suggestive, nay, necessary, to the proper understanding of the passage.

1. I notice first the substitution of "perishing" for "lost." Methodists do not believe, nor does the Bible teach, that men are damned above ground. The probationary period extends from the cradle to the grave; or, at least from the dawn of moral responsibility to senility. There are many persons moving in the society about us, with whom we are in daily and, I fear, unconcerned intercourse, in whom the process of perdition is begun. Indeed, it is rushing onward to an awful and irreparable catastrophe. The god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving. The light of the gospel of the glory of Christ does not so much as dawn upon

these darkened minds. This is bad enough. Thank God, it is the worst. Men are perishing, but they are not yet lost. There are none in whom perdition is a completed work. For even the son of perdition, Christ prayed. True it is, that he that believes not on the Son of God is condemned already. But he is not irreversibly condemned. There is yet opportunity, nay, gracious invitation, to enter a plea that shall change the ruling of the court from eternal doom to immortal felicity. While there is life there is hope, and

“While the lamp holds out to burn,
The vilest sinner may return.”

2. The substitution of “veiled” for “hid” flashes a search-light all over, and around about, and into this passage of Scripture after a manner that amply vindicates the claim of the revised version to be the best critical commentary on the Bible available to the English reader. This one word “veiled” establishes the connection with a great illuminating context in the preceding chapter, where we are told that Moses put a veil upon his face, and grounds the Apostle’s argument in the noteworthy Old Testament incident from which it starts. You may read the incident at length in the thirty-fourth chapter of Exodus. Here I can only give such an epitome as is necessary for my purpose. After the destruction of the first tables of the law, under distressing circumstances not needing now to be considered, Moses ascended into Mount Sinai to receive the second edition. While he communed with God in the mount, a communicated divine glory began to glow in

his countenance. Notwithstanding this divine origin, the glory proved to be evanescent. Therefore, Moses, when he returned from Jehovah to the people, and finished speaking with them, put a veil over his face. This he did for two reasons, which we may gather by joining together the history in the Old Testament and the apostolic interpretation in the New: (1) The children of Israel could not look steadily at the glowing countenance of Moses, and (2) Moses, as the Apostle catches the significance of the incident, did not wish the Israelites to see the end of that which was passing away and thus discover that the effulgence was communicated and temporary. Here we come naturally upon the two divisions of our theme, (I.) The Veiled Covenant, and (II.) The Veiled Gospel.

I. The Veiled Covenant.

I. The temporary glory, "passing away," was a symbol of the transitory character of the covenant of which Moses was the human mediator. Moses, from the apostolic point of view, had something to conceal. His covenant was imperfect and preparatory, and was to be abolished. He did not think it best, and it was not best, that the Israelites, from the beginning, should be acquainted with this provisional character of the covenant, of the law. But Christianity, the everlasting covenant, established on better promises, is never to be superseded by an improved gospel, and has no need to cover up, even temporarily, any of the developments of a divinely guided and divinely unfolding history. Here St. Paul agrees with St. John who declares that "the law was

given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." And both Apostles lay the massive foundations of the apology which was afterwards developed at such length and with such convincing force by the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews. Here an apostolic ministry—St. Paul himself draws the conclusions—uses great boldness of speech. God has made us sufficient as ministers of a new and everlasting covenant, and we "are not as Moses, who put a veil upon his face." By manifestation of the truth—the whole truth—apostolic ministers of the gospel of Jesus Christ commend themselves and their message to every man's conscience in the sight of God.

2. This temporary Mosaic covenant, which was not without its rightful place and glory, is described by St. Paul variously in this context as a ministration (1) of the "letter that killeth," (2) of "condemnation," (3) of "death." All these descriptions come to the same thing. There is no tendency in law, pure and simple, to help him who is under the law to keep it. Law is not enacted and organized for this purpose; it is not life-giving, but death-dealing. Penalties are always annexed to fall upon the disobedience which is sure to result. Law without penalty is as though it were not.

I was a boy of some six or seven years in the city of Louisville when, during the Civil War, silver change was superseded by the federal fractional currency—"shin-plasters," the bits of bright, new paper were contemptuously called. My mother had neglected to supply herself with one of the newfangled flat pocketbooks which were everywhere taking the place of the old-fashioned purses, that had a ring upon them to confine the small

coins in one end. Coming from the market one morning—for she was a very domestic woman—as she passed through the dining room into the kitchen, she slipped some of the new paper dimes and quarters under a goblet on the sideboard, at the same time saying to her little boy, who was playing quietly by, "Johnnie, don't touch that money." There was where she made her fatal mistake. Johnnie would not have known the paper was money if he hadn't been told. Scarcely had his mother disappeared in the kitchen, before he was under that goblet—at least his hand was—and the usual consequences followed. The board of education under which I received my earliest instruction was a shingle in my mother's hand. Johnnie grew to man's estate, and at length had a boy of his own, who evidently took from his father more than his name. When this boy's father and mother were preparing on Sunday morning to leave their home on the Vanderbilt campus to attend church, it became the father's duty to lay down the rules for the guidance of John, junior, during the absence of his parents. He told him not to meddle with the cook, who was preparing dinner in the kitchen; or with the books that were on the desk in the study; or with the flowers his mother was cultivating in the garden, etc., etc. If, on the return of his parents from church, John had not done everything he was told not to do, it was simply because there was not time enough to get around. These simple illustrations will enable us vividly to realize how law externally imposed by authority recognized as legitimate, and even as kind and loving, arouses the sense of personal freedom and independence, and results in disobedience.

Justification may, abstractly considered, be secured in one of two ways. It may be had by a perfect keeping of the whole law. Failing this, the sinner must become the heir of that righteousness which is of God by faith in Christ Jesus. The law must be preached to those who are out of Christ and refuse his gospel just as if there were no gospel. Only thus will men learn that they are under the curse of the law; that it is a ministration of the letter that killeth, of condemnation, of death. "I was alive without the law once," says St. Paul, "but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died." The law is our schoolmaster—the attending slave who sees that the pupils reach the true instructor in safety—to bring us to Christ, that we may be justified by faith.

3. By an easy transfer the veil on the face of Moses, the primary recipient of the law, is represented as a veil on the face of the covenant itself: "until this very day," says the Apostle, "at the reading of the old covenant the same veil remaineth unlifted." And yet it is not a veil on the face of the covenant, a real and objective veil—at least for the Jews of Christ's and St. Paul's day—but a veil on the face or, more profoundly, on the heart of him that reads the covenant: "unto this day, whensover Moses is read, a veil lieth upon their hearts."

That veil remains on the heart of the Jew even to our day when the Old Testament is read, and the Christian Church has perhaps no greater sin laid to her charge than her neglect at least to attempt the removal of this veil from the Jewish heart. The Old Testament read and expounded Saturday morning in the Jewish synagogue by the Jewish rabbi is as much the word of God as the same Scriptures read and expounded Sunday morning in the

Christian assembly by the Christian elder. If there is a difference, the Jew has the advantage, for he has the message of prophet or psalmist in his own tongue wherein he was born and in which the message was originally written. Yet the poor Jew does not come to Christ. Why? Not because Christ in his saving power is not present in the Old Testament, but because the veil of Jewish prejudice and obduracy is on his heart. The rabbi may have read the account of the Conquering Messiah: "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever." (Isa. ix.6-7). Or he may have read the prophet's vision of the Servant of Jehovah, the Suffering Messiah: "He shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness: and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep

have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way: and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth. . When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied." In this fifty-third chapter of Isaiah is truth as ample for the salvation of men as is contained in the epistles of St. Paul. But the Jew is not saved. That veil is done away only in Christ. And when the heart of the Jew shall turn to Jesus, the veil shall be taken away.

II. The Veiled Gospel.

I. Coming to the heart of the matter and making a radical diagnosis, that concerns itself not with superficial symptoms, but aims to uncover the very seat of the disease, St. Paul explains the grounds of man's rejection of the gospel, common in his day, under apostolic preaching, as in ours. "If our gospel is veiled, it is veiled in them that are perishing." The fault and failure are not in the gospel but in the man. If the gospel does not suit the citizen of this world, all the worse for that citizen. The rejecter of the gospel pronounces his own condemnation and foams forth his own shame.

This is a day of often fatal accommodation, even on the part of the pulpit. When the gospel proves a stone

of stumbling and rock of offense, shall we forthwith proceed to take it back? Not if we appreciate the teaching of the Apostle Paul in this Scripture and imitate his example. If the sinner shirks repentance, shall we explain it away? If he refuses to make restitution, to bring forth fruits meet for repentance, shall we condone so culpable and so fatal a blunder? Never, never! By manifestation of the truth we must commend ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. The gospel is, at every point, exactly adapted to human needs. If there is a misfit, we must go to work on the man to adjust him to the gospel—not upon the gospel to adjust it to the man!

2. The gospel is the touchstone of integrity. When doubts are dug up, as a noted Georgia evangelist is fond of saying, seeds of meanness are often found at the root of them. Abandonment of wickedness is the first step toward a religious life. Fruits meet for repentance—this was the burden of John the Baptist's awakening and preparatory gospel; and so it must ever be. Covetousness and fleshliness and worldliness and devilishness are closely woven veils which hinder the gospel of Christ from dawning in human hearts. The god of this world is busily engaged weaving these veils and blinding the eyes of them that believe not, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should dawn upon them.

3. I may advance a step further. The gospel is the touchstone of sanity. Specialists are beginning to teach that everybody is partially insane. No human body is entirely free from disease. We think ourselves healthy

until we apply for life insurance policies. We are startled when the examining physician tells us that we are suffering from several maladies, any one of which may prove fatal at a moment's notice. So there are indications that every mind is limited, or warped, or stunted, or unreliable in certain fields of inquiry or in some of its processes and operations. Charles Darwin, who is disposed to be a theist when set upon by the agnostics about him is reported to have said, "I am conscious that I am in an utterly hopeless muddle." So keen had been his devotion to science, that he lamented his inability to appreciate Shakespeare or music. How difficult must it have been for the seraphic harmonies of the gospel to awake a response in the soul of this victim of one-sided over-development! Hypertrophy of the scientific brain had resulted in atrophy of the religious nature. Juvenal's *mens sana in corpore sano* is rarely or never realized in fact. I do not mean that the essentials of rationality and responsibility are absent from the carnal mind; but, practically, men make machines of themselves by their occupations, and, so fixed are their limitations and contracted their horizons, that, outside their own little fields, which they have spent a lifetime in mastering, their judgments are worthless.

The lawyer agrees that he cannot sell groceries or dry goods so as to make a living; the merchant that he cannot profitably practice law. But merchant and lawyer, when they stumble at the Word, are equally agreed that they are entirely competent to pronounce a final, adverse judgment against the gospel of Jesus Christ.

How puerile are the objections often brought! A Christian man can sometimes scarcely treat them with respect except for Christ's sake and the gospel's. How pitiable it is to see a man of the world, who has never given an hour's serious and unbiased thought to the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, and who would instinctively defer to professional judgment in all other matters outside his own calling, draw himself up with an air as if he had the constitution of the universe in his brain, and declare, "I can never believe a miracle—Christianity is for women and children." Christ long ago sounded the warning, "Whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall! it will grind him to powder."

Conclusion.

The remedy for all this blindness, the removal of all these veils of covetousness and fleshliness and worldliness and agnosticism, is found in turning from the god of this world unto the Lord. Moses had but temporary interviews with Jehovah in the mountain, having to put the veil upon his face again when he returned to the presence of the people. St. Paul does not hesitate to represent that, when the heart of him who does not appreciate and appropriate the gospel, whether the ancient Jew or the modern worldling and skeptic, is turned to the Lord—the Lord Jesus Christ, whom the apostle substitutes for the Jehovah of Moses's vision in the mount, thus affording an invincible though incidental argument for the absolute Godhead of our Lord—the veil is taken

away, and taken away forever. And we all, with perfect freedom of access into the glorious presence of our Lord, dwelling constantly there, and "with unveiled face reflecting as a mirror the glory of the Lord, are transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord the Spirit."

We sometimes wonder at the unshaken and unshakable faith of unlearned saints, who have never so much as mastered a syllable of the "evidence of Christianity." What is the secret of their confidence and stability, when others are broken by hurricanes of doubt and despair? They have the perpetually unveiled face. They understand the secret of his presence, and the approaches thereto. These unveiled faces and hearts always turned toward the King, reflect as a mirror the glory of the Lord. And they themselves are transformed into the same glorious image—an image of righteousness and strength and peace and joy, even as by the mighty power of the Lord the Spirit.*

* These paragraphs are the notes of a sermon, rather than the sermon itself. Having much other writing to do, I have not for many years found it necessary or expedient to write sermons in full. The foregoing is the best I can do in answer to the editorial call for a sermon to be published in the Wesleyan Christian Advocate Pulpit.

J. J. T.

SERMON IV.

GAMBLING—A SERMON TO YOUNG MEN

By REV. J. ANDERSON WRIGHT.

A Strong and Timely Deliverance.

Finding in one of our exchanges from England, The Methodist Recorder, of recent date, a sermon so well adapted to our conditions in this country, we galdly reproduce it. Gambling is, as this preacher says, both an "ancient and inveterate vice," and never before in this country has the vice been so widespread and so frequently condoned by those who ought to give it condemnation.

We regret very much that we cannot accompany this sensible and timely and strong sermon, as is our custom, with the photo of the preacher. Failing to see any physical features of the preacher, our readers will not fail to see mental features that tell of loyalty to God, and a heart interest in the well-being of man and of society. Pass the sermon under the eyes of our young men and so help to save them from ruin in a time of many and strong temptations.—Ed. W. C. A.

Gambling.

“Take heed, and beware of covetousness.”—Our Lord.
(Luke 12:15.)

“Thou shalt not covet anything that is thy neighbor’s.”—Tenth Commandment. (Exod. 20:17.)

The late Mr. Lecky, in his “Map of Life,” uttered this powerful and admonitory sentence: “Drunkenness, sensuality, gambling, habitual extravagance, and self-indulgence, if they become the pleasures of youth, will almost infallibly lead to the ruin of a life.” Many thoughtful men not given to exaggeration would take leave to revise the philosopher’s dictum, and would say that it does not require this array of vices, but that any one of these evils is potent and pernicious enough of itself to degrade and destroy the fairest and most promising life. Every member of this vile crew must be clapped into irons and kept under hatches, or the ship will soon be on the rocks.

Can drunkenness bring ruin? It seems a grim jest to ask the question. Every year strong drink slays its tens of thousands.

Can sensuality ruin? That cruel monster that scruples not

“To pluck the rose from the fair forehead of a maiden shame,
And set a blister there;”

that loathesome thing which besmirches love, dishonors the family, animalises man, degrades woman, outrages childhood, undermines society, enervates the State, and destroys all who do not destroy it? To ask the question is to answer it.

Can habitual extravagance and self-indulgence compass the ruin of a life? The reckless spendthrift who has come to rags and the workhouse; the young fellow who sacrificed honesty to vanity and silly display, and now mourns his folly as a felon behind prison bars; the miserable, hollow-eyed creature who shuffles along the city pavement, and the foul-tongued, leering youth who hangs about the low village "public" are a convincing and appalling answer to the question.

Can gambling ruin man, woman, youth? From a thousand quarters and from ten thousand lips comes back the mournful reply, "Yes." The late Bishop Westcott said: "The experience of those most competent to speak tells us that the effects of gambling are far more disastrous than the effects of drunkenness." We are not prepared to endorse that, but the statement shows the impression which the enormity of this evil had made on the mind of one who was, by temperament and habit, a scholar and recluse rather than a social reformer. Indeed, it was the growing power of these social iniquities that brought the Bishop from his books to fight the foe.

Let us define gambling, if we can; then consider its appalling influence and ravages; next get to the very root and essence of the act; and, finally, note the one remedy for this cancerous growth in human nature and society.

I. What is Gambling? What is Betting?

A bet is a wager, according to one definition, a game of hazard, the staking or pledging of some object of value on the issue of some game, contest, or event. Gambling is generally understood to mean the habit or constant practice of betting. An American dictionary says: "Gamble—to lose in gaming." That is unsatisfactory as a definition, though it directs attention to a common and bitter experience, for to win as well as to lose in the game is gambling. An able English writer thus defines gambling: "The risk of larger sums than one can afford on ventures over which his own industry exercises little or no control." This definition is vitiated by the mischievous clause, "larger sums than one can afford." Who can say when the limit is reached? The gambler will say he can afford the deadly pastime while he has a shilling in his pocket, though an ailing mother may be panting for a breath of the sea or a sight of the green fields, or wife and children are anaemic and half-starved. This writer thinks gambling wrong if it means pounds, but not if it means pence; he cannot see any harm in small risks. But surely the character of the act cannot be decided in this slapdash fashion. Gambling is essentially the same whether indulged in by an earl or a scavenger, whether the stake is a thousand guineas or a sixpenny-bit. We prefer Sir Walter Scott's uncompromising words in the Preface to "St. Ronan's Well": "Gambling is a vice which the devil has contrived to render all his own, since it is deprived of whatever pleads an apology for other vices, and is founded entirely on the cold-blooded calculation of the

most exclusive selfishness." That profound thinker, Mr. Herbert Spencer, points out that gambling is an anti-social act or habit, and that for two reasons. In the first place, it is gain without merit; and, secondly, it is gain through another's loss.

It is an ancient and inveterate vice. It has flourished from time immemorial, and in every country under the sun. Chinaman and Jap, Greenlander and Hindu, European, Negro, and Redskin have succumbed to its tremendous fascination. It is as old as sin, and was rife long before the Roman soldiers cast lots at the foot of the Cross for the Savior's seamless robe. Vice scorns geography, and enlightened men in every European country, and even in far Eastern lands, are becoming alarmed at the dominance of this form of wickedness; and, as to America, a minister of the Methodist Episcopal Church, Dr. J. P. Brushingham, has stated that working people in the States buy lottery tickets and bet upon baseball, football, the elections, and every variety of subjects. Students in the American universities do not escape the virus, and commercial and political life is fearfully impregnated with it.

II. In Our Own Country Gambling is Wide-Spread, Strongly-Entrenched, and Indescribably Mischievous.

Every class is infected. John Burns says: "The increase of gambling among working men synchronises with the passion for speculation amongst the middle and upper classes. One produces and stimulates the

other; they act and react in causing a state of demoralization without any previous parallel in our history." There is a decay of moral fibre in the English people which foreigners are quick to note, and which some are malicious enough to gloat over. Our reputation as a serious, strenuous, and reliable race is passing away. Our commercial supremacy, once unquestionable, is now challenged. Young men are so enervated by the craze for sport that they have no energy for vigorous business methods, and will often gamble at the desk and behind the counter. A successful business man in our Church recently declared that "it would hardly be believed to what an extent gambling has taken hold of young fellows in large business houses." In some towns on certain days, business is at a complete standstill because men will rush to the race course or the football field; and until quite recently our Imperial Parliament, an assemblage of men charged with the momentous affairs of the Empire, after the delivery of a number of inane and flippant speeches, punctuated by cheers and laughter, adjourned in order to visit Epsom for the Derby. (One could wish that English folk generally were as unenlightened as to the meaning of that sinister word "Derby" as a lady, probably from America or one of our Colonies, who traveled in a Midland train one day with myself and others, and who exclaimed to her husband, as the train entered the station at Derby, "Derby! Derby! I suppose this is where those famous races are run!"))

Our leading newspaper, the "Times," said a while ago: "Horse-racing is an amusement to which is directly traceable more misery, more ruin, more demoral-

ization than to any other pastime." And yet this journal inconsistently publishes sporting news. The proprietors of the London "Daily News," with splendid Christian courage, rigorously exclude both betting news and drink advertisements from that paper at great monetary loss, and they deserve, and surely will get, the support of all who love God and their country in this patriotic effort.

What a pity it is that Royalty should countenance this colossal curse! Their presence on the Turf throws an alluring glamour over a sport that breeds any amount of sordid trickery and unrelieved scoundrelism. When the annual visit is paid the whole district for many miles around is agitated, and thousands are drawn to the course whom no lesser names would attract. For some years I lived within a few miles of Ascot and Epsom, and can testify to the feverishness and general unrest, with consequent misery and ruin to some lives, which was the outcome of the appearance of members of the Royal Family at the racecourse. Nonconformists are loyal supporters of the present Monarchy. They do not forget that the King belongs to all classes, and would not dream of forcing him into any socially restricted ways of living; but they have a right to demur to his open and unblushing patronage of the Turf.

Lord Rosebery has recognized in a public speech the sound principle that the more exalted the position, and the more extended the influence of any man, the greater is his blameworthiness if he deliberately sanctions the pernicious and the immoral. When he became Prime Minister he says he made the discovery that what might

be innocent in others would be criminal in the First Lord of the Treasury. And in the same speech he advised his listeners to avoid this fascinating sport. He gave three reasons. In the first place, the apprenticeship is exceedingly expensive; in the next place, the pursuit is too engrossing for anyone who has anything else to do in this life; and in the third place, the rewards, as compared with the disappointments, stand in the relation of, at the most, one per cent. Any young man who is tempted to embark on this perilous pastime would do well to write these warning words of Lord Rosebery in letters of fire on his brain and heart.

Working men, their wives and daughters, and even young children, are the victims of this demoralizing passion. At the House of Lords Select Committee on Gambling in 1902, Mr. Robert Knight, representing the Boilermakers' and Shipbuilders' Association, said: "Young men and women betted more nowadays than previously. Between the hours of twelve and three one day in South Shields a bookmaker was recently seen to take 236 bets from men, women, and children." Mr. Knight declared that of those who betted not five per cent ever saw a horse-race. The business was done through those pests of society, professional bookmakers, who went round trying to obtain bets from the wives of working men, and would even waylay little children and filch their pennies from them. The bookmaker is a moral octopus whose tentacles fasten on the young, the innocent, and the unwary. He is a menace to civilization, a disgrace to a Christian country, and he, and his coadjutator in vice, the sporting prophet of the news-

papers, ought to be promptly dealt with as dangerous criminals. .

It is strange that men do not see that gambling is not true sport. "Punch" is right:

"The true spoil-sport is betting!
Although it suits the baser sort,
What's sport to them is death to sport."

Play is meant to calm the passions and soothe and invigorate both body and mind. Gambling strains the faculties, inflames the passions, and leaves every power depleted and exhausted. Luck takes the place of pluck, the wheel of fortune is substituted for manly effort, and men, instead of meeting in friendly rivalry, prey on one another like wild beasts of the jungle.

Sir Albert De Rutzen, the well-known Metropolitan magistrate, one day deliberately expressed the opinion that more mischief has been done by betting generally, and by street betting in particular, than by anything else within his experience; and another London magistrate, Mr. Horace Smith, said he believed that in ninety-nine cases out of every hundred embezzlement was due to betting.

I know nothing of the juggleries of the Stock Exchange, but could there be any more tragic comment on much that takes place there than the spectacle, only three years ago, of Lord Dufferin's name being dragged in the mire, and he himself reduced almost to beggary, after a long and brilliant career as diplomatist and statesman, through the misdeeds of another? It is difficult to read his letter to a friend, which afterwards appeared

in the "Times," save through a mist of tears. His eldest son had been killed in South Africa while gallantly leading his men into action, and exactly a year later came the news of the dangerous wounding of another son, who had been shot right through the body, the bullet penetrating the lung. And then, in addition to these crushing domestic sorrows, came the suffering inflicted by a financial brigand in whom he had confided. "I have indeed been wading in very deep water," he writes, "and it has required all my fortitude to go through the ordeal. The catastrophe has been brought about by the folly of our managing director, who embarked in a gigantic gamble on the Stock Exchange. It is really heart-breaking. I am nearly ruined, and, of course, many other persons are involved in the same calamity." Humiliated and heart-broken, Lord Dufferin died soon after.

A true patriotism would prompt men everywhere to make war on a vice which threatens the downfall of nations. "We are apt to boast sometimes that we are Englishmen," said Oliver Cromwell in a famous speech in the House of Commons—and surely his words are not without point today—"and truly it is no shame for us that we are Englishmen; but it is a motive to us to do like Englishmen, and seek the real good of this nation, and the interest of it." Not long ago a most determined attempt was made to found an establishment of public gaming tables in Cairo, which would have turned Cairo into a second Monte Carlo. But Lord Curzon was more than a match for the promoters of the scheme. He resolutely refused to sanction such an

establishment on the statesmanlike ground that it would have a particularly pernicious effect in Egypt, where the gambling spirit is already too prevalent.

It is unhappily undeniable that the fever and passion of gambling has attacked our Churches and Sunday-schools. A Lancashire gentleman one day told a well-known Wesleyan minister that on the day of their Sunday-school anniversary, as he came down from the gallery, he heard two of the scholars betting on the amount of the Sunday-school collections for the day. A Sunday-school teacher informed me that he one Sunday caught two boys surreptitiously examining a Saturday's sporting paper and negotiating a bet on something they found there. We shall fail to win a hearing for the Gospel from our young folk if they become consumed with this arid passion for gambling. In all our Sunday-schools, and in all day schools, too, children should be plainly taught the immorality and wickedness of betting. The Bradford School Board used to give special instruction on this subject, and we believe it is still done by the new Education authority. It needs to be done everywhere, and with frequency.

Mr. Lowther recently asserted that betting was innate in the Anglo-Saxon nature, and would always be with us. He might as well say that greed, selfishness, and hatred are innate in the Anglo-Saxon nature—which nobody denies—but he would not for that reason refuse to try to extirpate theft, burglary, and murder. The roots of every vice, alas! are embedded in human nature, but the poison plants need not be allowed to grow from those roots. The glorious Gospel of Christ

assures us that every root of bitterness can be grubbed out of the soil, that the heart of man can be swept clean of every foul and hateful thing, and nothing but peace, love, generosity, and purity find a home there. May God the Holy Ghost work that miracle in us all!

III. What, Then, is it at the Base of this Gigantic Curse? What is the Essence, the Motive of Gambling?

It is covetousness, greed, the desire to get money without doing anything or giving anything for it. Pleasure there must be in gambling, the flutter of the nerves, the morbid thrill, but the master passion is greed. If this is not so, why do they gamble in aristocratic circles for tremendous stakes? And why do they cheat, for there is cheating sometimes, even when princes play, as all the world is aware? So I think we have pinned down this sin of gambling. It is covetousness, a distinct breach of the great Tenth Commandment, "Thou shalt not covet anything that is thy neighbor's." It is a foolish and sinful violation of our Lord's solemn injunction, "Take heed, and beware of covetousness." The commandment is exceeding broad—"anything that is his." "Anything" is a threepenny bit, a box of cigars, a pair of gloves, £100—"anything that is his!" "Beware of covetousness!" is the pealing warning of our Divine Master, "who knew what was in man," and to what misery and shame covetousness might lead. Young men, remember that Divine "Beware!"

Gambling is a sin against our neighbor; it is a sin against the commonwealth. If Mr. Herbert Spencer was right, and gambling is a pleasure obtained at the cost of pain to another, is it not a cruel and detestable, as well as a dishonest act to gamble? Why wrong another? Mutual benefit is out of the question. What one gains another loses; what enriches one ruins another. Surely it is clear to every intelligence that what elevates one man by crushing another is the negation of all justice and brotherhood. "Gambling is incipient anarchy." Mr. Horsley, the well-known prison chaplain, said before the Betting Commission: "Of all the prisoners who come under my notice the most hopeless are the men who have been on the Turf. Their one maxim is—Do everybody, and see that no one ever gets a chance of doing you!" It has been said that there should be a new Lord's Prayer for the gambler; that instead of the prayer, "Give us this day our daily bread," it should read, "Give us this day our brother's daily bread!"

But remember that gambling is a sin against God. "It sets chance upon the throne, turns men into puppets, makes a muddle of the world, and sets aside Divine Providence for a base lottery." It dishonors and tramples underfoot the categorical imperatives and solemn warnings of the Most High; it subverts the practical sovereignty of God; it ignores the sublime examples of the Son of God, who came not to rob but to redeem, not to destroy but to save, and who calls us to follow in His steps. It is an awful crime against the law and

the love of God, and needs the expiation and cleansing of the Redeemer's blood.

If you have never gambled, be thankful, and beseech God every day to preserve you from this inhuman, polluting, and presumptuous sin. If you have stained your hands and your conscience with this wickedness, repent of your sin and folly without a moment's delay, and, by God's grace, never repeat it. Better go in threadbare coat as an honest, God-fearing man than in broadcloth as a grasping schemer and dissembler. One of the finest things in Macaulay was his imperiling his seat in Parliament as member for Edinburg by his refusal to subscribe to a race-cup. "I am not clear that the object is a good one," he said. Take your stand for righteousness, whatever it may cost you. A clear conscience, a happy heart, an untarnished character are worth more than the Bank of England.

Give your life to God. Serve His Son, your King and Savior, with such all-engrossing enthusiasm as shall leave no room in your soul for sordid greed. "Let no man seek his own, but each his neighbor's good," and so you will bring visibly nearer the fulfillment of that great prayer which Divine lips have taught us to utter: "Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven."



REV. J. H. McCOY,
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SERMON V.
THE MASTER WORD
OF THE KINGDOM

By REV. J. H. MCCOY

The Master Word of the Kingdom

Text: "And in thee shall all the families of the **earth** be blessed." Genesis 12:3.

In these words, spoken by the Almighty on the occasion of His call of Abram to be the father and founder of His chosen people, we discover the divine purpose and preparation for bringing salvation to all men everywhere. The missionary idea is not an afterthought of God, brought to light in a late dispensation; rather it is God's forethought, underlying and interpreting all revelation. Jesus did not turn to the Gentile world, after His rejection by the Jews, as a mere opportunist who saw his only hope lying in that direction. It lay at the heart of His mission to manifest the universality of the saving purpose of God. The earlier are as truly missionary in spirit and purpose as are the later dispensations. Indeed, the missionary idea is the unifying and illumining thought of revelation—binding together its successive dispensations under one steadily developing purpose that issues in the universal kingdom of the Christ. Our text, therefore, is a key that unlocks the mystery of the whole divine economy.

The election of Abram looked beyond the patriarch himself to a chosen nation. Nor yet was this peculiar people God's objective. He was looking all the while

beyond Israel to "all the families of the earth." Jehovah never intended that He should be the God of the Jews in the narrow, partisan sense in which Baal was the God of the Babylonians. He was not to them, as they so often seemed to think, a mere national convenience and safeguard, as were the inhabitants of Olympus in their partisan alignment with favorite Greek and Trojan heroes about the walls of Troy. On the contrary, when the Jews forgot and turned away from God's manifest purpose in their election, He turned away from them with swift and condign punishment. They were His people, chosen only for the furtherance of His widening and increasing plans for all men, and not for the gratification of their own selfish, temporal ends. The whole structure of the book of Jonah shows that it was written for the didactic purpose of correcting the error into which the Jews were constantly falling, of thinking that they had exclusive, proprietary claims upon Jehovah—that He cared not for other nations—that His love and saving purpose never looked beyond the Jews themselves.

God's relation to Israel was a regime of spiritual tutelage for world-wide spiritual service. Trained to hold right views about God and to understand the laws of man's relation to Him, the nation was simply made the depository of Heaven's redeeming powers entrusted to it for a world lying in darkness and the shadow of death.

There is yet a wider view to be taken of Jehovah's ground work of preparation for missions. Not only was He with sublime purpose moving within Israel to this end but outside the chosen nation, as well, He was

preparing the way for His all-inclusive kingdom. The history of the peoples of earth is not a meaningless, purposeless jumble. A careful study of the ethnic and political relations of the past will convince, beyond all doubt, that God all along has been governing the world providentially with reference to the final triumph of the kingdom of Christ. It so happened, in the then inscrutable providence of God, that the Jews, by bondage, captivity and dispersion, came into intimate touch with every great contemporaneous world-civilization. Egypt, Babylonia, Persia, Greece and Rome, by this providential contact, had their thought fertilized by the truth wrapped in the Jewish religion. That truth became a mighty ferment in the world's life. The history of its workings is read in the tottering of polytheism to its fall when Jesus was born into the world. Already the philosophers of Greece had proclaimed one spiritual God and the masses of the Greek people had come to look upon their gods as fit only for adornment in art and literature. So had the truth shaken the foundations of paganism in Roman thought, that in three centuries after the tragedy of Calvary, a Christian emperor sat upon the throne of the Caesars and ruled Rome in the name of Him whom Rome had crucified.

Christ came into the world "in the fulness of time," at the conjunction of events that the world has always regarded as providentially ordered with exact reference to this event. The nations were at peace, the temple of Janus being closed for the first time in many years, giving that quietude necessary to thought about God and the things of eternal life. Grecian culture had prepared a language unrivaled until today for delicacy and

exactness of expression, that stood ready as an ordained vessel to receive the deposit of Christian truth. And Rome, mistress of the world, with her unrivaled system of highways and her rule of law and order, stood ordained, by every providential token, to give the Gospel safe conduct to the ends of the earth.

Faith finds no difficulty in discovering one increasing purpose running through all the ages. Infinite love is seen in marshaling all the stormy centuries of human history, like parts of a mighty army, toward

“Some far off, divine event
To which the whole creation moves.”

If the world-embracing purpose of God in the provisional regime of the law and the prophets and in the providential world-movements is unmistakably patent, then, in the spirit and words and acts of Jesus, it is supremely accentuated as the dominant, determinative note of the whole divine economy. In the Son of Man the divine love is seen breaking down the false barriers that misunderstanding bigotry had set about it, and seeking to reach the uttermost limits and the nethermost depths of human society. The gravamen of our Lord's offence to the Jews, and especially to the Pharisees, was the fact that He exercised His saving mercy on Gentiles—that He received sinners and ate with them. One of the few formal defenses that He made of Himself was called out by this charge. His only answer to their indictment was the utterance of those matchless parables of the lost sheep and the lost coin and the lost son. The throb and passion of the divine love for the lost—simply the lost, without other name or descriptive ap-

pellation—which we feel in these parables, was His justification for carrying His blessed ministry beyond the pale of His own race to the wretched publicans and forgotten sinners. The bigots who thought that God had chosen them for themselves alone, who felicitated themselves that they had a monopoly of the grace of God, saw with undisguised amazement and disgust their hoped-for Messiah talking graciously to the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well, and going home to dine with the publican, Zacchaeus, and commanding the faith of the Roman Centurion. In rage they turned against Him and hounded Him until the rising tide of the nation's wrath swept Him to His death. But He did not die until He had shown how God had always felt and would forever feel toward the neglected ones whom religion and society both had banned. He lived long enough to let the despised who had been counted strangers to the covenant, hear His words of hope fall upon their hungry hearts like the breaking of a new dawn. This truth that He lived to declare unceasingly by word and deed, He died to announce in the new, high language of sacrifice. The crucifixion was a publication to men that "God so loved the world"—not simply a chosen few—"that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

The Jewish nation could no more have monopolized Jesus than it could have produced Him. By His own chosen designation, He is the Son of Man, rather than the Jewish Messiah. The chief circumstances of His life are prophetic of His world-relationship. Born of Jewish parentage in a mean Judean village, while yet

cradled in the manger the Gentile world sends its wise men to offer Him homage. Crucified at the instance of the Jews on a charge pertaining to their religion, it so happened that that mighty event was lifted by the superintendency of divine Providence into relationship to the whole world; for the cross on which He died was furnished by Asia, prepared by Europe and borne, in the person of the Cyrenian, by Africa.

After His crucifixion and resurrection, the world-scope of the redeeming purpose of God in Christ received a new definiteness and comprehensiveness of statement. Hitherto, the master-word of Jesus had been, "Come;" now it is "Go"—"Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." This is the end toward which the divine love has been moving through all the ages.

And yet, the expression of the mind of the Spirit with reference to missions does not close with the Great Commission, as mighty a climax as that is. After leaving the gospels, we see, under the superintendency of the Holy Spirit as its Executor, the same great thought being carried forward with cumulative clearness and power. The dispensation of the Spirit is emphatically a missionary dispensation. He is administering the affairs of the Church with manifest reference to the same determinative idea which has governed all the previous dealings of God with men.

The history of the day of Pentecost on which the Holy Spirit entered upon His own peculiar administration, is nothing less than a missionary epic. That record has furnished the data of untold missionary appeals.

It is profoundly significant that the first great inaugural act of the Spirit, on His assumption of the divine administration, was an act prophetic of His missionary purpose and activity. The very symbol of His presence—cloven tongues (not a single tongue) as of fire—signified His intentional use of all the tongues of human speech to carry the burning message of salvation to the ends of the earth. On this great day in the history of the Church, when Peter stood up to preach, “there were dwelling at Jerusalem devout men out of every nation under heaven and every man heard them speak in his own language.” Here was a divine forecast of missionary history. Here we see the Spirit outlining the sphere and agency of His operation in carrying forward to completion the plan announced in the call of Abraham.

Very soon after His advent, we find the Spirit striving against the exclusiveness of Judaism and seeking to make of the Church a fold into which should be gathered, not the Jews only, but all the families of the earth. It seems almost incredible that, after hearing the words of Jesus, so full of universal love; after witnessing His ministry to the Gentiles; after listening to the Great Commission and seeing the Church organized in light marching order for its movement upon the ends of the earth; after participating in the marvels of Pentecost, the apostles should have held to the idea that the Jews only were to make up the membership of the Church. And yet, such was the case. And we see one of the characteristic administrative acts of the Holy Spirit in correcting this mistake, when He instructs Peter on the house-top at Joppa to open the doors of the Church

to the Gentiles. Already He had anticipated this official ecclesiastical act by communicating to Cornelius the fact of His divine acceptance. This incident is profoundly representative of the Spirit's administration in the early Church. Those first years are full of His work of dispossessing the minds of men of their old, narrow ideas of the latitude of the kingdom, and of His efforts to thrust out the agents of its propagation into the broad fields of universal conquest. It was a divine, not a human impulse that started the Church on its world-career. Everywhere that apostles and leaders of the Church turned to the hitherto despised and neglected, it was under the initiative and leadership of the Holy Ghost, the great missionary head of the Church.

It was the Spirit who sent Philip on that wonderful missionary itinerary recorded in the eighth chapter of Acts. Philip went out under sealed orders, but, as the sequel shows, under a divine Providence ordering the future of the Church. He is commanded to go "south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusaelm to Gaza, which is a desert." There he met the chariot of the Ethiopian eunuch who held the post of treasurer under Candace, queen of Ethiopia. That was not an accidental conjunction. God was as truly in the crossing of those two paths as He was in the immediate command of Philip to join himself to the chariot of the Ethiopian. In this incident we see the divine strategist moving upon Ethiopia, and that under circumstances that were calculated to make mightily for the spread of the gospel.

So vital to the life of the apostolic Church was the missionary idea, that its administrative head subordinated the appointment of its workers to the missionary interest.

The Church at Antioch has requisition made upon it for its two ablest ministers for missionary work among the Gentiles. "The Holy Ghost said, separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them." In the mind of the Spirit was now organized an aggressive and far-reaching move upon the Gentile world; and the whole machinery of the Church must co-operate to that end. The Church at Antioch, and through it the Church everywhere, was to be taught through this requisition that the cause of missions is not a thing to be patronized and played at; it is the Church's real objective, and, as such, claims her fullest and best resources. The organization of the Church is not an end within itself. It is a means looking always to that great end, the completed, universal kingdom of Christ. And the blessing of God abides upon it just in proportion as it realizes the purpose of its being. No anti-missionary Church can live. God simply abandons to its death a Church that assumes that its relation to Him is one of selfish and exclusive privilege, not of service and sacrifice. Some few years ago I resided in a Southern town of about two thousand inhabitants, in which there were only two white Baptists. I could not understand why it was that this aggressive denomination, perhaps the strongest in the State, was so poorly represented in this particular town. I spoke to a friend, a prominent Baptist minister, of the anomalous situation, and he said: "Yes, and there is a text, if you care to use it, for a missionary sermon. We once had a strong Church in that town, but years ago that Church, by formal resolution, decided that it would not contribute a cent to any cause outside of its own local needs. From

that day it began to die. Now the situation is a living judgment of God upon the anti-missionary spirit in His Church." Soon after the conversation just recounted, one of the two remaining members died and the other joined the Methodists. The Church was literally wiped off the face of the earth. I should say, however, that lately the State Mission Board has gone to the relief of the situation, and, by liberal appropriation and heroic work, has reorganized the Church. It is needless to say that the new organization was effected upon very positive lines of missionary thought and effort. Phillips Brooks was once asked, "Bishop, if you were pastor of a Church that was burdened with debt, so that the members were too much discouraged to make further effort, what would you do?" Without a moment's hesitation came the reply, "Take a collection for foreign missions!" And he was right. God feeds and keeps alive and endows with more power the Church that is seeking to carry out the Great Commission by responding constantly to the missionary leadings of the Holy Spirit. "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." The divine presence is conditioned on the performance of the great task set before the Church. The promise of the power of the Holy Spirit was made with specific reference to its use in missionary effort: "But ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you; and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth." Our prayers go unanswered because they are

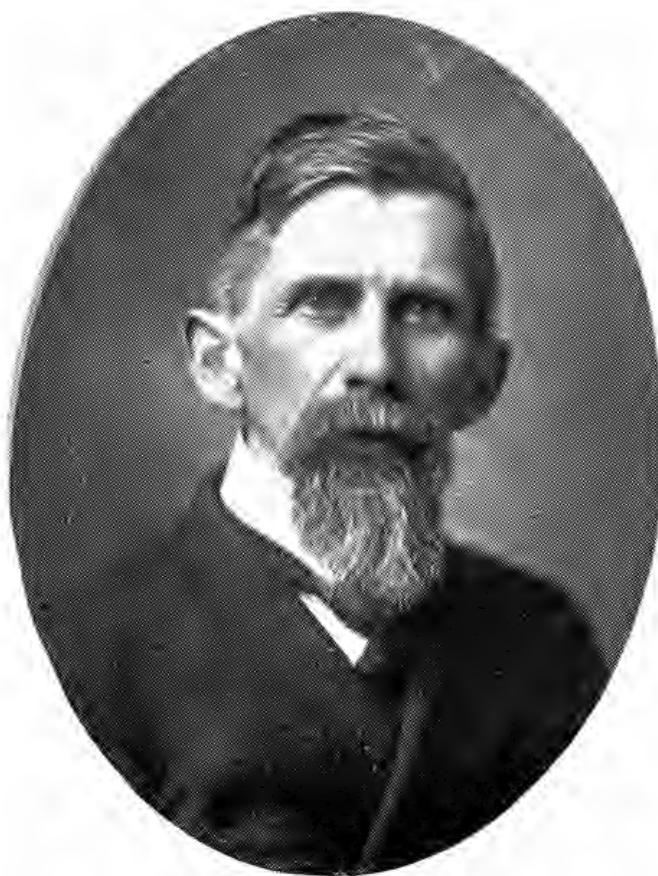
too self-regarding. "Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts." It were a bitter travesty on prayer to lift our dervish-wails for power when we have no thought of its use beyond our own spiritual delectation. The condition of the divine presence and bestowal is inexorable. God has no use for a Church that He can not use.

God's missionary purpose in the organization of the Church, that runs like a scarlet thread through all the dispensations of His grace, a purpose about which all His providences are articulated, has not changed in these later times. The Holy Spirit is still administering the affairs of the Church with the evangelization of the world as His objective. Any proper interpretation of the great world movements of today will reveal the hand of the divine strategist subsidizing and shaping and subordinating the forces and world-powers of the Twentieth Century to the glory and dominion of Christ. He has put the wealth of the world and the secret of the control in the hands of the Christian nations—largely in the hands of the Anglo-Saxon—and by providential contact has brought to our hands such opportunities of missionary occupation as the world has never known. In our election to His unparalleled favors we will read, if we have eyes to see, the measure of an unprecedented call to the service of our hands. God's gifts are also His commands. Opportunity and obligation are inseparable. If the Church of our day, with its vast organization and unaccounted wealth, does not see its opportunity in present day conditions, blind indeed is it to the unfolding providences of its Head. If it does not respond to the challenge of its strategical situation, recreant it is to that

abundant grace that marks the measure of its responsibility.

All about me, where I am writing, are the numerous furnaces of this rich mineral district of Birmingham, their smoke filling the heavens by day and their fires lighting the skies by night. From the waste of these furnaces the chemist is making numerous by-products for commercial use. But the real business of the furnace is to make iron. The by-products are but an incident to that. Too long the Church has regarded its missions in the light of a by-product. I have traced the missionary purpose of God, running as a spinal idea through the Scriptures, to make clear the fact that this is the master-word of the kingdom. To disciple the nations is not merely one of our privileges: it is the one business of the Church.





REV A. W. QUILLIAN,
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SERMON VI.
THE PROMISES OF GOD.

By REV A. W. QUILLIAN.

The Promises of God.

Text: "Blessed be the Lord, that hath given rest unto His people Israel, according to all that He promised: there hath not failed one word of all His good promise, which He promised by the hand of Moses His servant." II. Kings 8:56.

The history of Israel was a marvelous history. A family of less than one hundred souls went down into Egypt for food and a temporary home. There, in a remarkably short time, that family became a multitude. The increasing number of the descendants of Jacob excited the fears of the rulers of Egypt. They took steps to diminish the growing power of the Israelites. They were reduced to slavery, and their bondage was made cruel and bitter. Their lot seemed hopeless. They were not able, unassisted, to break the bonds that bound them, and there was no human power to which they could look for help. They could cry to God alone for deliverance, and this they did.

God heard their cry and came to their help. He raised up Moses for their leader, and sent him to them with the promise of deliverance from the bondage of Egypt, and also with the promise of a home in "a good land and a large," "a land flowing with milk and honey." In a marvelous way He accomplished what He prom-

ised. Moses, speaking of their deliverance, said: "The Lord brought us forth out of Egypt with a mighty hand, and an outstretched arm, and with great terrible-ness, and with signs and with wonders." He guided, protected and provided for them in their journey from Egypt to the land of Canaan. The pillar of the cloud was before them by day and the pillar of fire by night. "Day by day the manna fell."

God gave them victory over their enemies who rose up against them. During all those years they were in the wilderness they had the unmistakable evidence of His presence with them.

When they reached the end of their pilgrimage, and came to the land toward which they had journeyed during their forty years in the wilderness, God put them in possession of the country. They built homes and founded cities. They took their place among the na-tions of the earth, and begun a national history that men will always study with interest, because in it God, in a peculiar way, reveals Himself to man.

In the course of time, David, the brave soldier and sweet singer, was made King. During his reign the na-tion greatly prospered. It increased in power and wealth. Dwelling in safety, the men of wealth were no doubt encouraged to build fine homes. David built himself a palace. In the midst of their wealth and increasing lux-ury he conceived the idea of building a house for God. For this purpose he collected a large amount of material but was not permitted to carry out his plans. This great desire of his heart could not be gratified. He had to leave the building of God's house to another. Solomon, David's great son and successor, took up the work after the death of his father. Happy is the man who has a son.

capable and willing, to take his father's unfinished work after his death, and carry it forward to completion.

This Solomon did. He built the house David desired to build. Could David have foreseen the house, he would have been satisfied with his son's work. Compared with many houses that have been built, it was not large; but it was nevertheless, one of the most costly buildings ever erected. An enormous amount of gold was used in ornamenting the interior of the house. Walls were covered with pure gold. It was the pride of the Jews, and they ever remembered the glory of that house.

When completed it was dedicated with great pomp and ceremony. Solomon on that occasion was the central figure. "Visible to the whole vast multitude, Solomon stood in the inner court on a high scaffolding of brass. Then came the burst of music and psalmody from the priest and musicians, robed in white robes, who densely thronged the steps of the great altar." After he had prayed to God, he blessed the people. From this our text is taken.

In that hour he looks back over the past history of his people. This was an appropriate time for such a review. It was the brightest day in all the life of that nation. It was the high water mark of their history. Never would they see so glorious a day again. He looks back to the time when they were slaves in Egypt, when Moses came as God's messenger, promising them deliverance from bondage and a home in a land of their own. Those promises had been the inspiration of their efforts as a people. It was a promised land towards which they journeyed when they left Egypt. The word of God was their title to it. As Solomon reviewed their history,

he saw all those promises fulfilled. Their history was a story of fulfillment of God's promises. The promises of God have inspired the hopes and moved to action His people Israel.

A study of God's Book will show that this has ever been His method of dealing with men. He has encouraged, inspired and moved them by His promises. The lives of the saints have been lived in response to God's promises. Men have taken God at His word, and the result has been good, pure and holy lives. They have trusted His word, and have been enabled to accomplish wonders. In the bitterest experiences each one of them could sing:

"My darkest night
Thy loving smile shall fill with light;
While promises around me bloom,
And cheer me with divine perfume."

Thus, step by step, God has always led His people through life, and comforted and sustained them in death.

His Book is full of promises, great and precious, but so far as the circumstances of the men at the time to whom they were given are known, they were made to meet their needs in the real experiences of life. The examination of several of the promises will show this

1. When God called Abram to leave his native land his home and the home of his friends and loved ones—He demanded of him a hard thing. Men love the land of their birth and the associations of childhood. Even the Eskimos love the ice fields of their Arctic homes, and they are not willing to forsake them. It was probably

one of the most fertile spots upon the face of the earth. The inhabitants of that land had developed an advanced civilization for that day. From a worldly standpoint it was a desirable place to live, and no doubt Abram was strongly attached to the home of his childhood, youth and young manhood. He had married there, and doubtless had made his plans for the future, expecting to end his days among his own people in the land of his birth. But the call of God came, saying: "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house unto a land I will show thee." Abram needed more than the command to encourage and comfort him in making the sacrifice necessary in order to obey God. The Lord gave him needed promises: "I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing. And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed." He had faith in God's good word of promise, and "went out not knowing whither he went."

2. Another occurrence in the life of Abram illustrates this truth. Sodom was captured by a strong force, and Lot, with all he had, was carried away by the victorious troops. News of Lot's capture came to Abram, who was only a few miles from Sodom. He acted promptly. Arming his servants, he went in pursuit of Lot's captors. He surprised and defeated them, and rescued Lot, and recovered the spoils they had carried away. After his return Abram must have thoughtfully considered what he had done. He was no soldier. He had no army, and yet he had made war on kings who had strong armies. What could have been more reasonable than for him to fear their return to avenge the defeat they

had suffered at his hands? Then it was "the word of the Lord came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield and thy exceeding great reward." Never did Abram feel more in need of such assurance, and in that hour of his great need the promise came.

3. The Master had a multitude of poor people about Him when He was on earth. They were constantly asking themselves, "What shall we eat? or, what shall we drink? or, wherewithal shall we be clothed?" These were pressing questions with many of them, and are the pressing questions with many now. Few get away from them. The great business of life with most men is making a living and they find it a difficult matter to get food, raiment and shelter. The Master knew the urgent need of the great majority of the multitude that thronged about Him. He sympathized with them, and for their comfort gave them that assurance of God's care of them we find in the sixth chapter of the Gospel according to Matthew. He told them to consider the birds of the air and the lilies of the field. God takes care of the one, though they sow not, nor reap, nor gather into barns, and clothes the others, though "they toil not, neither do they spin." He asks, will God take care of these things of so little value, when compared with man, and neglect His own children? No man could think He would. "Therefore," says Jesus, "take no thought, saying, what shall we eat? or, what shall we drink? or, wherewithal shall we be clothed? for your heavenly Father knoweth that you have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto

you." Those poor people needed this promise, and therefore it was given.

4. Take one more case: The assurance given Paul of the sufficiency of divine grace for all the trials and sufferings of life. It came to him not in a time when all was well with him, but in an hour of great suffering. He had what he calls a thorn in the flesh. What this was I do not know, but it was something that gave him great pain. He could find no relief, and in his distress he cried to God. Then, in that hour of his need, came the promise of grace sufficient for him, and this changed his prayer into praise.

While it is true that these promises of God were made to meet the needs of the men to whom they were originally given, yet they were not for them alone. They are for all men. God has no favorites. He loves all of His children alike. When He told one man that if he obeyed Him, He would bless him and make him a blessing, He said it for all men. The man to whom the promise first came was made the means of communicating that truth to all men. God has never spoken a word to one of His children that was too good for all. If He assured Paul that His grace was sufficient for him in the hour of his great suffering, He said it for the comfort of every suffering child of His in all lands and in all ages. When Christ taught the men who were about Him when He was here upon the earth, not to be anxious about the things of this life, and promised them that their Father would take care of them, His words were for all the children of God who are struggling with the hard problems of getting on in this world of so many pressing demands. God's promises, like his air, are free to all.

Every man who will can make them his own, and get out of them the inspiration, the encouragement and the comfort he needs in life.

It is marvelous that these "exceeding great and precious promises" meet all the varied needs of human life. No two have ever been just alike. There is always something that differentiates them and gives each man his individuality. As this is true, it is not possible for any two men to have in every particular just the same experience. We all feel this in some measure. How often when trying to advise or comfort some one in trouble are you told, "You do not understand me. My case is peculiar." Yet there never has been a case so peculiar that God's book did not furnish a promise just suited to it. He has provided for all. In His infinite wisdom He has given promises so large and so rich that they are equal to every need of man. If any one of us is in darkness, crushed by the heavy weight of life's burdens, it is because he is either ignorant of God's promises or does not trust them. A knowledge of God's word and faith in it would bring him out of darkness, and free him from the anxious cares that rob him of peace and joy. If we perish, we perish with the food God has provided for us within our reach.

But experience alone reveals to us the deep meaning and value of these promises. We may be acquainted with the history and the literature of the Bible, and yet be ignorant of the inestimable value of what it contains, just as a man may own land in which, hidden below the surface, there lie diamonds of fabulous value, and be ignorant of his great wealth. Experience uncovers the riches of God's word to us. One has said, "Our insight into the meaning of Holy Writ will be in

proportion to the strength of our faith in divine grace and the measure in which it has proved in our experience an emancipating power, bringing liberty to our reason, our conscience, and our heart." Only as we come to these promises in our own conscious need will we experience that:

"Here the wretched sons of want
 Exhaustless riches find,
Riches above what earth can grant,
 And lasting as the mind."

The Christian who reviews his own past is true.

How many are God's promises of salvation to the believer found in the Bible, but you heard them often without appreciating their value. They were of but little importance to you. You heard them without the least emotion. But when God brought home to your conscience a sense of your own guilt and sinfulness, all was changed. When you experienced something of the feelings of the psalmist, who wrote: "The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me; I found trouble and sorrow," then you learned to value the great and precious promises of salvation. You seized them as eagerly as a drowning man clutches the rope thrown to him for his rescue. With increasing hope you heard or read the words: "Look unto me and be saved, all ye ends of the earth." "Let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, and He will abundantly pardon." "Whosoever shall call upon the Lord shall be saved." God so loved the world that He gave His only

begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." Then the sentiment of your heart was:

"Just as I am, without one plea,
But that thy blood was shed for me,
And that thou bidd'st me come to thee,
O, Lamb of God, I come!

"Just as I am thou wilt receive,
Wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve,
Because thy promise I believe,
O, Lamb of God, I come!"

These promises now seen in the light of your experience are above price. You had rather part with life than with your interest in them.

What is true with reference to the promises of salvation is true of all the promises. The man who has never known anything but wealth all of his life; who has never spent an anxious hour about food and raiment and shelter for tomorrow, cannot appreciate the promises of God's care for these things, as the man does who finds it a constant struggle to keep the wolf from the door. But while some cannot appreciate much of the value of these promises, there are thousands of God's poor who go through life singing:

"The birds without barn or store house are fed;
From them let us learn to trust for our bread:
His saints what is fitting shall ne'er be denied."

These promises of God to them are the greatest comfort. They sustain them in the great trials to which they are often subjected and they learn to prize them above silver and gold.

Through experience God is teaching all His children to value His good word of promise. One man is being taught the value of one promise while another is learning to prize some other promise. The same man, at different stages in his history, comes to a knowledge of the helpfulness of one promise after another, just as he experiences the need of what each offers. Christian life is at every step promise led and sustained. Men go forward trusting God's word and, like the history of Israel, each Christian life is a story of the fulfilment of God's promises. Men trust God, and find that not one word of all His good promise fails. His word is the sure foundation upon which their hopes rest. With confidence they sing:

"How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,
Is laid for your faith in His excellent word!
What more can He say than to you He hath said,
You who unto Jesus for refuge have fled?"

When the Christian looks back over the past of his own life, and sees that at every step God has been faithful to His word, his gratitude must move him to praise, as the review of Israel's history moved Solomon to praise at the dedication of the temple. And some time in the future, when we get home to heaven, we will review our lives and see just what they were. We will see in them many mistakes, failures, sins, and much unfaithfulness on our part, but we will be constrained to say: "Blessed be the Lord, that hath given us rest according to all that He promised; there hath not failed one word of all His good promise, which He promised by the hand of His servants and His Son."



REV. W. N. AINSWORTH, D.D.,
South Georgia Conference

SERMON VII.

THE FACT OF SIN.

By REV W N. AINSWORTH, D. D.

The Fact of Sin.

Text: "Fools make a mock at sin." Proverbs 14:9.

The fact of sin! The words that stand at the head of this exhortation need to be pondered until they become a conviction, i. e., affect conscience, heart and will. Though penned a thousand years before the Christian era, they are as pertinent to present day conditions as if written this morning. In that remote age men who denied the fact of sin or held it to be a trifle were characterized as fools. Despite the full and clear revelation of this age of light, the same folly prevails today. The multitude fail to apprehend the real nature and the fatal consequences of sin, while not a few religious teachers have either denied the fact or demonstrated by an incongruous theology that they have never felt the Spirit's conviction of its reality.

A waning sense of sin is characteristic of the age in which we live—a fundamental fact that should awaken our most serious concern. People have no adequate sense of sin. Too often their very confessions of sin are nothing more than a kind of veil to cover their self-righteousness. They will admit that they are imperfect, that they sometimes do wrong, that perhaps they need forgiveness, but the current doctrine of sin, which is purely naturalistic, is fatally defective. Some great

truths are so essential to the integrity of the Christian system that to reject them is to render us incapable of grasping aright any other saving truth. The scriptural doctrine of sin is of this fundamental character. The failure to entertain sound views as to the fact and guilt of human sin is the fruitful source of every form of theological vagary, affecting the whole superstructure of the Christian system. A superficial sense of sin is the peril of the Church today. It explains in large measure the lack of spiritual power and earnestness in the Churches. Everything depends on what we mean by sin. As Bishop Candler says, "Men hold cheap the salvation that is in Jesus Christ, by just so much as they regard sin as a slight matter. Penitence will be shallow and conversion of little worth with souls who think sin scarcely more than an excusable misfortune. Deliverance from sin will excite in such minds no strong desire, and, if by any means they might be converted, they would feel nothing of the rapturous joy of salvation."

In this time of spiritual desire, when Georgia Methodism is engaged in daily prayer for the revival of the Lord's work, it needs to be graven on our hearts that a deepening sense of sin is a necessary precursor, as well as the accompaniment of every spiritual awakening. The great revivals, that are the sunlit summits of ecclesiastical history, have been marked by a quickened sense of sin. The religious leaders, Paul, Augustine, Bernard, Savanarola, Huss, Wycliffe, Luther, Knox, Wesley, Whitfield, Moody—a line of torchbearers who have kept the divine life aglow in the Church—preached repentance and salvation out of a realizing sense of the fact and fatal consequences of sin. No man has ever had or can

have the evangelistic note in his preaching until he has gotten an adequate view of human need. Nothing is so essential to a clear grasp of the mediatorial work of Jesus Christ as a clear apprehension of human woe and want and sin. The minister of the cross must see this squarely, in all its due proportion, then will he persuade men with tearful tenderness to be reconciled to God, preaching Jesus not as the luxury, but the necessity of human life—the only name whereby we can be saved. A proper sense of sin is the measure not only of doctrinal soundness and evangelistic fervor, but of religious experience as well. There is no surer test of growing spirituality than an increasing “sensibility of sin; a pain to feel it near.” With all growth of holiness there grows the sense of sin.

The false views of men as regards the subject of sin have their origin in a philosophy that repudiates the supreme authority of the Bible as a revelation from God, and now grants to modern science the place of authority once conceded to Christ and His apostles. When the Bible is denounced as an antiquated book, and men get their notions of sin from their own depraved understanding, their judgments will be proportionately lowered, and a gospel of culture substituted for that “faith once delivered to the saints.” These apostles of modern science assert that human nature is essentially good and may rise to the highest excellence in the evolution of its own life. The problem of evil, which is no evil properly so-called, resolves itself into a conflict between the appetencies of the animal nature and the aspirations of the spiritual nature, which conflict itself is a necessary part of the process of human evolution. What we now

call evil was once normal and natural and good in a former stage of existence. It now becomes an excrescence to be lopped off and laid aside. The adherents of this philosophy see the elements of all good in human life, needing only time for its full fruition, independent of any external force.

If Jesus Christ be preached by the apostles of this religio-scientific faith, it is wholly devoid of the note of necessity. The best that He could do would be to hasten the process of human evolution. Rather this philosophy has much to say about circumstance and environment. "Sin and misery," they tell us, "are the removable results of social circumstances, and poverty, ignorance, and class distinctions are the root of all crime and wretchedness." Edward Bellamy declares that humanity is a rose bush, "planted in a swamp, watered with black bog-water, breathing miasmatic fogs by day, and chilled with poisonous dews by night." Seeing that the plant would not bloom and that the gardeners toiled in vain, he asserts that a change of soil is what is needed. There are many social problems that must enlist the sympathetic concern of the Church, but individual salvation must be the starting point. The real problem, as George Jackson points out, is the rose bush itself. The supreme factor in the life history of any organism is "the nature of the organism itself." Everything depends upon the character of the life that is to be developed. The doctrine of environment as the soul's saviour was smashed to pieces in the Garden of Eden. All that philanthropy and education can do for mankind is but rolling away the stone—a work which Jesus commanded to be done—from the

dead man's grave. Lazarus is still to be brought forth. Only Jesus Christ can do that.

Christian science goes a step further and denies the reality of sin in any form, and openly repudiates the necessity of any sacrificial atonement. "Sin," they tell us, "is artificial, and therefore bound to pass into the tomb of oblivion, without even an epitaph to mark the place of its burial." The disciples of this Americanized paganism are increasing throughout the land and in places are becoming clamorous for recognition as a Christian Church. The subtle poison of this cult, namely, that sin has no real existence, and that the doctrine of the atonement is therefore a repulsive delusion, has pervaded even the ranks of the pious. Infidelity has changed its form, but never before have Zion's watchmen needed to be more reminded of their vow to drive off all "erroneous and strange doctrines."

In opposition to this philosophy the Bible regards sin as a reality, the dark plague spot of human nature, and gives to it a large place in its pages. Indeed the whole Bible is a treatise on the subject of sin and its remedy. Christianity is a plan of salvation. The founder of Christianity was called Jesus, because He saves His people from their sins; He was hailed as "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world," and it was proclaimed by His disciples "that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners." Entirely consistent with this are the anticipations and promises of the Old Testament. In the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms sin is recognized as the radical and greatest evil from which man needs to be delivered. While the scriptures do not undertake to give us a comprehensive defi-

nition of what sin is, they do not fail to proclaim its reality and declare its nature and consequences, grounding the whole remedial system of Jesus Christ on the fact of sin, and presenting Christianity, not as a divine benevolence to increase the well being of men, but as the only deliverance from a most terrible and deadly evil.

If the universal sinfulness of the human race were not already the most undesirable of moral facts, it could never more be doubted after Calvary has been set in the midst of the eternities. The meaning of Christ, of the Incarnation, of Calvary is the fact of sin. "Christ died for our sins"—"my blood for the remission of sin."

This is the regal truth of revelation. Christ did not become incarnate, identifying Himself with human life in all the wide range of its experience even to the depths of death, in order, primarily, to reveal to us the love of God. The death of Christ brings to men a demonstration of God's love that can never more be doubted, but this was not in His own thought or in the thought of St. Paul, its primary object. His death was for the remission of sin. As Dr. R. W. Dale puts it, "the revelation comes through the redemption, and not the redemption through the revelation." The fact of Christ means the fact of sin.

Not only does the fact of the incarnation prove the reality of sin, but Jesus Christ in all of His teaching is explicit upon the universal sinfulness of the race. The case might be lodged with Him. His moral standards are higher than any man's. He Himself is the embodiment of His ethical code. Matthew Arnold says, "Christ is the absolute: we cannot get behind Him nor above

Him." His piercing insight into the depths of human character and greed discovered sin where hitherto the philosophers and moralists had not known it. There are certain violations of rudimentary moral law, which all men class as sin, but Jesus Christ marks as sin every deviation from a perfect standard.

A popular misconception, which goes far to account for a diminished sense of sin is the notion that God does not take cognizance in men of any thing less than flagrant violations of moral law. Certain flagrant transgressions, those which outrage public decency, or inflict grave injury upon our fellowmen, or tend to subvert the social orderliness of life, all men count as sin, but they forget that Jesus marks as sin every variation from His own spiritual standard. He pronounces a curse upon "whosoever shall break the least of these commandments," and asserts, "he that is unjust in that which is least is unjust also in much." In the breadth and spirituality of His judgment no sin, however small in the estimate of men, can be trivial in the sight of the holy God, and when men pick and choose from the requirements of God, and class as non-essentials those that pertain to the little faults of men, they are guilty of trifling with sacred things. We judge of sin, as we judge of most things, by their outward form. We have no proper balances to weigh sins, but subtle and unseen sins, that exist in the higher reaches of our nature most near to the spiritual, are probably the most degrading. Sins of disposition, such as passion, malice, worldliness, covetousness, pride, are as deadly to the soul's health as the grosser forms of transgression. Indeed in the analysis of Jesus Christ sin does not consist in outward acts at

all, but in a state of the heart. "From within, out of the heart of men, evil thoughts proceed, fornications, thefts, murders, adulteries, covetings, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, railing, pride, foolishness." Without any manifestation in outward form, there may be an alienation of heart and a deep and damning hatred of God in the human soul. Jesus is the author of the Church's doctrine of original sin. No subject of theological inquiry has aroused such criticism and resentment, and it must be admitted that the doctrine has been overstated. "Original sin" does not mean original guilt, and "total depravity" does not mean that every man is depraved to the last possible degree, but the Church does teach that the corruption of the nature of every man extends to all the faculties of his spiritual being, and that he is fallen beyond any power of self-recovery. This Jesus plainly taught. A distinguished scientist has recently said, "Science has joined hands with Christianity on the question of original sin. Men are born with their moral natures as deformed and imperfect as the physical." It is only when one gets back into these hidden depths and wakes to the appalling consciousness of his own corruption, that he cries for deliverance from "this body of death."

Moreover, Jesus includes in His estimate of human sin a large bulk of sins of omission. Sin includes not only what is done contrary to the will of God, but what we fail to do in the positive requirements of His will. Two of the sharpest arraignments of sin in all the doctrines of Jesus have reference to what is not done. "He shall convince the world of sin, because they believe not on me"—not believing. This is the monster sin. "He

that believeth not is condemned already. And this is the condemnation that light has come into the world and men love darkness rather than light." Jesus is the light that reveals and condemns. No thought can measure the moral obliquity of the man who believes not on Jesus. He is the soul's test. Then again He says, "Inasmuch as ye did it not unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye did it not to me"—not doing. What a vast volume of neglect is chargeable against us all! St. Paul adds to this indictment a very explicit statement. "If any man love not the Lord Jesus let him be anathema"—not loving. Countless omissions are included in Jesus' estimate of sin.

But this is not all. The natural man does not recognize that his sin is against God. He may recognize that the evil of his life inflicts injury upon himself, and upon society, but there is in this judgment no sense of guilt. This is where the socialist fails in his conception of sin. Our sins have separated us from God. We sustain a relation to the moral governor of the universe, and sin is not against society merely, nor against self only, but is against the authority, holiness, and majesty of Almighty God. No naturalistic theory of evolution can include the fact of guilt, but when God comes into the sinner's consciousness, sin takes on a darker coloring and guilt becomes the foremost fact in the sinner's thought. "Against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned and done this evil in thy sight!" is the cry of one face to face with both God and sin. There is no penitence until we trace our transgressions beyond the violated law and see their relation to the personal God.

In the view of Jesus Christ sin was a reality. We must take His verdict. It is a solemn thing to get God's verdict. He saw human sin in all its depth and proportion, and saw something which made Him weep over men like people weep over graves. But dark as is the great shadow that lies across the world, there are wider areas of heavenly light. "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." The fact of Christ is God's answer to the fact of sin. "His own self bore our sins in His body upon the tree," making thereby an atonement for all sinners and for all sin.

When the fact of sin is realized under the ministry of the Holy Ghost, applying the perfect standard of God in Christ Jesus, the necessity of the sacrificial work of Christ will be understood. The cross will become the one foundation of human hope. The theologian may have a thousand difficult questions to propound and answer about the atonement, but no man can understand the Cross of Christ, until he looks at it through penitential tears. "When conviction bears her torch through the secret chambers of the soul," nothing but a divine sacrifice can give the guilty conscience peace and purge away the guilt and stain of sin.

The atonement is addressed to the sinner's deadened sense of sin and upon this highest truth of revelation God hath ever set His Spirit's seal. If the sense of sin is waning and the peril of the Church is a superficial and defective sense of sin it is because the cross is not preached. The aesthetic and ethical aspects of Christ's character may furnish a kind of inspiration to the moralist, but after all, the sinner will not be convinced of

his sin nor weaned of his alienation until he sees Jesus "having become a curse for us, that He might redeem us from the curse of law."

In these days when the constant prayer of the Church is to the Lord Almighty for the revival of His work, our preaching must make two notes unmistakable to all. We must sound the note of sin until the conviction of its fact burns and blazes in the consciences of men. We must sound the note of necessity in the atonement of Jesus Christ until He becomes to men an issue of life and death. Then will be begotten a repentance that is not a mere remorseful or apathetic feeling of regret, but a hopeful, healing, sanctifying sorrow that leads to the consciousness of the sons of God.





REV. FLETCHER WALTON,
North Georgia Conference.

SERMON VIII.
THE MISSION AND MEDIUM
OF THE CONVICTING SPIRIT.

By REV. FLETCHER WALTON.

The Mission and Medium of the Convicting Spirit.

Text: "It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I go, I will send Him unto you. And He, when He is come, will convict the world in respect of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: of sin, because they believe not on me; of righteousness, because I go to the Father, and ye behold me no more; of judgment, because the prince of the world hath been judged." St. John 16:7-11 (R. V.)

In the farewell discourse of Passion Day, Jesus stands in the shadow of death. His disciples are facing what they think the greatest loss that could befall them. They have heard from His own lips that they are to be separated from Jesus, and in the institution of the Memorial Sacrament He has made it plain that this separation means His death.

It is to prepare them for this event that He speaks. All that is coming, He tells them, is for their good and the success of His cause. His death means triumph for Him, and blessedness for them. He will pass from their sight that He may establish a more vital and intimate

union with all who believe in Him. The Holy Spirit will come, and through His indwelling Jesus will be perpetually present with all who love and obey Him. They will be as fully conscious of His invisible presence as any ever were of His visible presence. This was consummate consolation.

While preparing His disciples for their great sorrow by preparing this blessed consolation, Jesus proceeds to lead their minds from grief to the thought of a tremendous responsibility. He commits his cause to them. The interests and future of His kingdom—a work of world-wide magnitude—are deliberately turned over to these insignificant Galileans and their like. He calmly asserts that even greater works than He has wrought will be done by these men. He will show an astonished world what he can do with this crude material. Their mission is the greatest in all human history. They are to face a lost world and evangelize it. It is a sinful world, under the dominion of the world-power of evil, "The prince of this world." He is strongly intrenched in human nature; is arrogant, malignant and resourceful; his vantage ground is great; he has possession of the depraved and perverted minds, instincts and passions of men. They are led captive at his will. His power must be arrested, and an entire race of sinners must be made to see their need of the Gospel. For such a work as this mere men, however trained, talented and zealous, are altogether incompetent. Hence Jesus pledges the spiritual resources of the godhead. The equipment He promises is equal to the magnitude of the work and the power of the opposition to be met. The Holy

Spirit will be sent, not only as the Consoler of the disciples, but as their Strengthener, Champion, and Joint witness. He will be a powerful agent of conviction to the sinful world. He is promised by Christ as the Holy Spirit who will deal with the unholy spirits of men.

Let us examine:

I. His Mission of Conviction.

1. He will convict in respect of sin. Notice: of sin—not sins. He will compel the individual to turn his thoughts inward, and force him to see the fountain of sin in a perverse will. From this issue forth the foul streams of evil practice—sins.

The seat of sin being in the region of choice, the assault must be made there. So the Spirit invades the mind, and the fact of sin is seen in this: right and wrong have been known as such; a feeling has always been present that the right should be followed and the wrong rejected, and despite this the wrong has been chosen. Hence sin will be realized as a conscious and deliberate state of lawlessness. The conviction of it will discover more that sin is self-will asserting itself not merely against known law, but against the author of law. It is not a thing which condemns sin, but a person, the Holy God.

Still further, the Spirit will discover the enormity of sin: “Of sin because they believe not on me.” The rejection of Christ meant His crucifixion, and His crucifixion manifested the madness to which resistance of God can lead men. Evil intrenched in human life,

deliberately pursued in preference to the highest good, culminates in hatred of goodness. In Christ God has come lovingly near men, to teach and bless, to make Himself known in tenderest relations, humbling Himself to their level. He seeks His lost children, to deliver them from the dominion and doom of sin. He sets forth in the life of His well-beloved Son the beauty, strength and glory of manhood in right relations with Himself, thereby making known the moral and spiritual possibilities which are open to every child of the Father. He seeks reconciliation with his human children. The horrible deeps to which sin may plunge men are seen in the treatment accorded Christ. The world He came to save will not permit Him to remain among men. It hounds Him to death and will not even allow Him to die respectably. He is publicly stripped, lashed, put to open shame, gibbeted, and forced to die a slave's slow death on a cross, as if He were a villainous criminal and impostor. This is the enormity of sin—it would not stop short of deicide. It was the fearful meaning of this sin which the Holy Spirit by the mouth of Peter charged home upon the multitude on the day of Pentecost which brought forth the agonizing cry, "What shall we do?"

In the present age men may ask, what part have we in the sin of Christ's death, that we should be treated as guilty? The answer is, sin is a unit. Sin in any human heart today is capable of a growth in evil which will make a man equal to the commission of any deed ever done in the past. In fact, the sinful world of the present, in rejecting the crucified Lord is virtually endorsing the course of those who delivered Him to death.

Their sin was the crucifixion of Christ; the crowning sin of the world in the present is the rejection of the crucified Christ—a far greater sin than the other because of centuries of increasing light. The sin of Christ's rejecters today is equal to the weight of His credentials as the Savior of sinners for nearly nineteen centuries. This is the burden of guilt which will be put upon the world by the Holy Spirit when he convicts of sin.

2. He will convict in respect of righteousness. The conviction of sin is possible, because of the perception that its opposite was within the power of choice, and there was obligation to choose it. The opposite of sin is righteousness, and hence the Spirit will convict of the obligation to righteousness. He will appeal to the life of Jesus as the standard; and every man will be compelled to feel that His life ought to be like that. In that life the sinful mind, so prone to plead the power of appetite, instincts and impulses within and the hindering influences without, as making righteousness impossible, will be forced to see that righteousness has been achieved. Men everywhere have pronounced Jesus righteous, and by His resurrection the world is made to know that God has declared Him so. Hence since Christ has lived among men the obligation to righteousness upon all is higher than ever before, and therefore the Holy Spirit will cause men to see its imperative necessity. The heart of man will be unable to rest content without it, and he will feel that nothing short of it can be accepted by God. But the conviction wrought in the sinner's mind will carry him to the full realization of his utter

lack of righteousness—to a sense of moral bankruptcy; and this point must be reached before he will appreciate the divine purpose in dealing with the soul.

This brings to view the glory of the Holy Spirit's mission of conviction. It is His province to reveal to men their worst—their wretchedness and poverty and ruin—that He may hold before their eyes God's offer of restoration to righteousness. This is the Holy Spirit's "good news." It was the assertion of Jesus that He would give His life as a ransom for men: that He would shed His blood for the remission of sins. He also taught that forgiveness of sin is offered to all who exercise faith in Him; that all who believe in Him will pass out from condemnation into the favor of God. Faith in Him as the Son of God and the Savior of sinners—a faith which opens the life to Him and gives Him a welcome—this will bring a man right with God. God will restore such a man to fellowship with Himself—will give Himself to that man. This is the Gospel—the gift of righteousness offered to the world. It means pardon, peace and power over sin because of the coming of God into man's life. It is restoration to righteousness.

Is this Gospel true? Where is its proof? There is, first, historical proof. The resurrection and the ascension of Jesus into the heavens is God's seal to the redeeming mission of his Son. It is a fact of history that Jesus died, rose from the dead, and ascended into the heavens. The Holy Spirit has inspired and preserved the glorious record of these events. "Him hath God exalted with His right hand to be a prince and a Savior." But there is experiential proof of these things

in the breast of every convicted sinner. Jesus said, "I go to the Father, and will send the Spirit to convict the world." That He is with the Father is demonstrated by the Spirit's presence in the world convicting men—the Spirit here proves that Jesus is there. Moreover, the Holy Spirit's convicting power felt in the hearts of unholly men is incontestable evidence of the possibility of righteousness for them—of God's earnest, yearning desire to impart it. The conviction of righteousness is therefore a ministry of hope to all its subjects. Let every sinner be assured that his conviction means there is hope of the righteousness which is by faith—that through it God is seeking to bring the ungodly unto justification.

3. He will convict of judgment. Conviction of the presence and nature of sin, of the lack and yet the necessity of righteousness, and of the provision for it, brings with it a fearful sense of condemnation—self-condemnation—judgment. The power of evil is realized; conscience rouses; the memory of past sins revives. Satan's grip is felt. A great battle begins. The struggle for freedom is on. The forces of good and evil are massed. The "prince of this world" magnifies himself and his advantages. A sense of weakness haunts the stricken soul. Habit is strong; appetite cries for gratification; sin has made the will weak and resulted in manifold infirmities, so that despair is suggested. The pleasures and advantages of many sins are made to beguile and attract again. History is appealed to. Have not the kingdoms of this world been under the dominion of Satan? Is not compromise of principle

always necessary to success? Has righteousness been able to win on the earth? Has not "the prince of this world" waived a victorious banner over every battle-field? Is it not folly to entertain the thought of deliverance from the bondage of sin and evil? Heredity habit, environment—are not these a trinity of giants no man may expect to conquer? Is there a power which can accomplish the defeat of "the prince of this world" and the forces under his control? If so, where? Does not this sense of self-condemnation in the sinner's breast, and these questionings, imply somewhere the existence of moral resources for recovery and renewal? Indeed, the presence of the Spirit in man is the secret of this state and these interrogations. Hence it is now the mission of the blessed Paraclete to work the conviction in respect of judgment. "The prince of this world has been cast out"—overthrown. Satan and sin have a conqueror! Christ is that conqueror. "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the Devil." The incarnation was the beginning of this victory, but the cross was the scene and is the sign of His triumph. Sin slew Him; but in His crucifixion He was enabled to taste death for every man, and so become the Savior of a lost world. The cross was the hour of crisis between good and evil—between God and Satan—it was to be determined there whether righteousness or sin is the stronger. The resurrection declared Christ a victor, not for Himself only, but for all who become organically connected with Him by an abandon of trust.

When a conviction of judgment—meaning that righteousness is victorious—and that Christ's victory means

the offer of victory to every sinner who will enter into union with Him—when this is wrought the Spirit declares the fact that a crisis has come in a man's life. The issue is joined. The doom of sin is seen, and a deliverer is offered. A decision is called for. Destiny hangs on that decision. A decision must be made. The "crisis" has come. Christ Jesus, the conqueror of sin, death and Satan, is pressed upon the guilty soul as its only hope of righteousness. The choice must be made. The issue must be closed—sin renounced, righteousness as the gift of God accepted—or else a "fearful expectation of judgment, and a fierceness of fire which shall devour the adversaries."

II. The Holy Spirit's Medium of Conviction.

The explicit pledge of Jesus Christ regarding the conviction of a sinful world raises several pertinent questions: Why has the world to so large an extent been unconvicted? Calvinism will explain this promise of Christ as applying only to the elect portion of the race. But we hold that the Spirit has a mission of conviction to all men. Why is it that wherever the Gospel is preached there are not more manifest signs of the presence of the convicting Spirit? Why is it that despite the multiplication of Churches and preachers there seems to be a decreasing sense of the sinfulness of sin among men? Has Christ's promise failed? Is His word no longer to be trusted?

A careful study of the text reveals a truth of momentous import. Jesus said: "If I go not away the Com-

forter will not come unto you; but if I go, I will send Him unto you." And He, when He is come—unto you, implied, because reiterated in the previous sentence—"will convict the world of sin." Here we see:

1. The Holy Spirit does not, strictly speaking, reach the sinner independently of a medium. No sinner is convicted without the operation of human instrumentality; at least in the Christian sense of conviction. As light from the sun must avail itself of the small particles of dust in space in order to the illumination of our houses, so the Spirit must have a medium by which to transmit Gospel light. As electricity for practical purposes must have visible or invisible means of transmission, so the Spirit of God utilizes a human medium by which to establish connection with the hearts of sinful men.

2. The medium ordained by Christ and used by the Holy Spirit in convicting the world, is the Christian life in the world. He commissioned His followers before His ascension to continue His work. His purpose was to enthrone Himself in their lives by the Holy Spirit. Only through men was He to be known; only through men was the Spirit to be able to convict and save sinners. He cannot convict the world, in the Christian sense, except through Christian life and effort.

The mission of the Spirit in the individual believer and in the Church is to reproduce the life of Christ—"that the life also of Jesus may be manifested in our body." Christ withdrew from the world as a visible person that through the Spirit's power He might be multiplied in human lives all over the world. The Spirit

in Christians is to continue the earthly life of Jesus among men. The same Jesus whose resurrected body has been glorified at the right hand of the Father is to find a body in all who believe in Him on earth. It is in these duplicates of Christ that the Holy Spirit is to find a medium for the conviction of the sinful world. Before men can be convicted of the sin of unbelief they must see the Christ who is to be believed on—the Christ must be transplanted into human lives of flesh and blood in the present. And it is the mission of the Holy Spirit to glorify Christ by incarnating Him as an indwelling presence in every believer. Thus and thus only, can He find a medium by which He can accomplish a conviction “of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment.” He is shut up to this. If He is not succeeding in His ministry in the world, the reason is to be found in the unfaithfulness of those who claim allegiance to the crucified and ascended Lord—they are defeating His purpose. The Savior must be fleshed in saved men; the Redeemer must stand forth in a redeemed life, or the Spirit is handicapped in His convicting mission.

We will see, if we honestly study the New Testament Scriptures, that the responsibility for the conviction of the world is thrown upon those who bear the name of Christ. If they do not yield themselves to the Spirit in order to the reproduction of “the life of Jesus in their mortal flesh,” He cannot prosecute His ministry to unsaved men. It is this tremendous truth which needs to be burned into the hearts of all who have made the Christian profession. When this fact is brought home to the average Christian mind there will be such

widespread awakening as the world never witnessed before.

Let us recall that memorable statement of Jesus: "As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you." What was His mission? "The Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost." How did He accomplish that mission? He "gave Himself for us." How are we to accomplish ours? By giving ourselves—our whole life—up to His absolute dominion. As He gave Himself up to the will of God so we are to give ourselves up to His will. The law of sacrifice for us is as imperative as it was for Him. He **died** for our sins that we might die to sin. He redeemed us that He might own us, and in us perpetuate His sacrifice and passion. We are to be practically and really His property in all we are and possess. The whole of life is to be brought under His sway, that what he was in Himself on earth He may be in us. For the Christian self-interest is to be totally renounced—selfishness crucified—life actually and absolutely handed over to Christ for the enlargement and continuation of the Christ-life in the sight of men. This is the appeal of Christ to the Christian's conscience and His demand upon his will. "Ye are not your own." This means immensely much. It throws the lien of absolute ownership over the Christian's entire being, his whole time and all his possessions—he is to be the implement of Christ's centripetal will—the subject of His autocracy. The Christian is to have no aim but Christ's, no purpose but Christ's; and this is to enter into every avenue of life's activities. When one gives himself to

Christ the whole center of life is reversed. Henceforth all talent, all time, all property, all business relations, all social relations—these are to be subdued to the great purpose which throbbed in the heart of Jesus on earth and which engages Him now in heaven—that redemption may reach the lost—that the rule of God may bless the lives of men by winning them from the power of sin. Christ must dominate the entire range of the Christian's life, to demonstrate what He is to the world that knows Him not. This is His only road to the hearts of sinful men. They must see what He is, before they will realize what sin is and what righteousness means—and must see this in life before conviction can be wrought by the Holy Spirit. Christ is to the world largely what the Christian is—men know Him only to the extent of His manifestation in human lives. And it is that a full-orbed Christ may stand forth before men that the Holy Spirit was promised by Jesus to His followers in all ages. This is the meaning, in part, at least, of the baptism of the Spirit. And that baptism is a fundamental necessity therefore to all Christians—not a luxury for the spiritually self-indulgent to enjoy upon occasion—but a necessity for every Christian life, for every day of life and in all the affairs of life. Because therefore, the need of it is so great the condition of it is stated simply—consecration to a life of implicit obedience to God. This is stated in the words of Peter: "We are his witnesses of these things; and so also is the Holy Spirit whom God hath given to them that obey him." When "every thought is brought into captivity to Christ," and the Holy Spirit is desired, "that

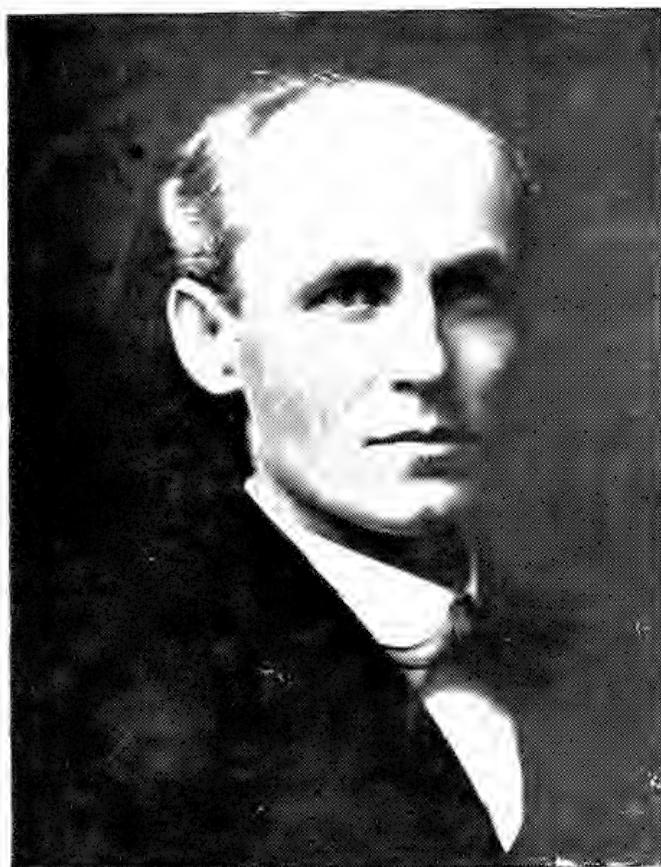
Christ may be magnified" in our bodies, "whether by life or death," then He will be given. When the supremacy of Christ is submitted to, when the entire range of life's activities is consecrated in obedience to Him, then the Holy Spirit will dwell in Christians as His temple. Thus the Spirit will have a stupendous convicting medium which He can use with powerful effect. He will be able to press upon men in sin convincing proof of all the truths of the Gospel which bear upon the present life—and so bring them to feel the need of Christ's saving power. On the contrary, if the testimony of the Christian life is not available the Spirit has no witnesses by whom He can establish the claims of the Gospel to be "the power of God unto salvation." He has no Christ in men on earth by whom He can demonstrate the existence of a saving Christ who has gone into the heavens, and therefore His convicting power is at a standstill.

Is it not high time for the Church to awake to realization of her fearful responsibility? Should not her barrenness startle her? When statistics tell us that the average increase in all the individual congregations in America during last year was only three members to the hundred; when the facts show that in Georgia the increase in membership of the Churches falls far below the birth rate of the commonwealth, is it not time we should cry unto God for the restoration of Spiritual life? Shall we not mourn our fruitlessness, return to God, renew our covenant with Him, put away our idols and follies, establish again the line of demarkation between Christianity and worldliness—between the followers of

the crucified Lord and the followers of "the prince of this world"—and thus bring back the Holy Spirit into our Churches? If we do not this Almighty God will renounce us and raise up others who will be faithful. For "the self-indulgent Church which disfigures Christ; an avaricious Church which bears false witness against Christ; a worldly Church which betrays Him and gives Him over once more mocked and reviled by His enemies," and withholds a body for Him to inhabit, will have its candlestick removed.

Let us thank God there are signs of repentance and renewal in many quarters. The Spirit of God is brooding over many of the Churches. There are indications of a world-wide revival. Let us quench not—grieve not—the Spirit, but welcome Him, obediently yield ourselves to Him, that He may renew again His office work of convicting a sinful world with overwhelming success. And let us ever remember that the measure of His convicting influence on the world is determined by the depth and character of spiritual life in the Church.





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SERMON IX.

THE PROPER RECOGNITION OF GOD, AND OUR RELATION TO HIM.

By REV JOHN C. KILGO, D. D.

The Proper Recognition of God, and Our Relation to Him.

Text: "And God spake all these words, saying, I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have no other gods before me." Exodus 20:1-3.

The first utterance of God on Sinai proclaims the supremacy of His own personality and gives solemn warning against any thought of diverting human faith to any other gods. This exclusive authority is set forth in terms of quiet dignity, entirely befitting the majesty of Him in whom dwells all infinitudes of power. Free from the pomp with which the blinded prophets of pagan deities clothed the imaginary words of their speechless gods, these words show that calm sense of divine grandeur of which only God can be eternally conscious. One of the many infallible proofs that the Bible is the word of God, is that it speaks of Him as only He can think and speak of Himself. It is of vital importance that we, at this time, should exalt God in our faith and thought, especially since modern ideals and methods tend to turn the faith of men away from Him.

The supremacy of God is given precedence in every revelation He has made of Himself. It stands forth in all His works of creation and is declared in the first state-

ment of the Holy Scriptures. "In the beginning" are terms which assert all priority in time, while the further declaration, "God created the heavens and the earth," enthrones Him above all orders and all forces and all destinies. He is what McCosh calls "That beginning back of which there is no other beginning, and that foundation beneath which there is no other foundation." As all creatures proceeded from Him, so all are made to depend upon Him. Saint Paul gives expression to the absolute relation of all things to God when he says, "In Him we live, and move, and have our being."

The infinite perfection of a personal God is the seat of all moral authority. The Holy Scriptures make short work of the sophistry and puny quibblings about the "ultimate grounds of right." When Moses stood before the burning bush and received orders to go to Pharaoh's court and demand Israel's freedom, the greatness and the difficulties of the task appalled him. Should Egypt's king demand his credentials what should he say? Tell him, "I AM hath sent me unto you." These are the final words. They reach back to the ultimate basis of authority. Clothed with the commission of God there was left no place for the exercise of diplomatic arts and no room for the discussion of national treaties. Israel's freedom had been decreed in high heaven, and heaven's decrees are absolute at every throne. They are not schemes presented to earthly conventions to be amended to suit the tastes and the conveniences of human passions and human贪欲.

In olden times the credentials of the prophets were, "The word of the Lord came unto me." The splendid vision of Isaiah was a sublime manifestation of God's eternal sovereignty and, from that solemn hour, he went forth to publish the word of God to his declining nation. He did not speculate about political questions nor did he theorize about social conditions. With the same authoritative note in his voice which sounded through the words of Samuel in the early days of his nation's life, this man spoke final words which came to him out of the eternal mind. The prophet in all ages has acted under the same heavenly compulsion and has rested his cause upon the delivery of the message given unto him. Luther, in an age of superstitious despotism, filled his prophetic mission in spite of the satanic storms that raged about him. Heedless of all earthly voices and insensible to all personal comfort, he did the work of one sent of God. The invincible courage and the incessant labors of Knox and Wesley were not born of earthly ambitions, but these men, like the hero of Carmel and the Forerunner by Jordan believed in God and were assured of a commission from high heaven. So an efficient ministry in all ages has been a God-sent ministry, and has never wasted its energies and squandered its influences in the silly conceits of earthly claims. Standing upon the authority of God, the authority of a living and a ruling God, it has proclaimed truth with a steady assurance, and left the proof of its apostolic commission in a record of immortal achievements.

The moral authority and moral force of the Holy Scriptures arise out of the fact that they are the word

of God. Moral authority is a personal quality; it is not an abstract formula. It requires more than correct statement and logical proof to move the consciences of men. And that which has given the Bible its indestructible place in the faith and conduct of the ages, is not the esteem of ancient and lofty literature, but the eternal throne which stands back of its injunctions and its doctrines and its promises. Much fine speech has been had about the exquisite eloquence and ethical superiority of the Sermon on the Mount, the main object of which seems to be a defense of its claims to the approval and esteem of men, but if it be not the word of the Son of God, it must take its place along with the words of Socrates and the Meditations of Aurelius. The truth arises not out of the logic of it, but in the personality behind the logic; the power lies not in the eloquence of it, but in the God-man who proclaims it; the authority does not rest upon the literary form of it, but in Him who spake with authority and not as the Scribes. Martyrs have not been literary fanatics yielding their lives a ready sacrifice in the interest of poetic beauty and eloquent prose. They have pined in dungeons, and they have died in the flames, because of Him in whom they believed to be all the fullness of God.

The sad decay among the people of that reverent interest in the study of the Holy Scriptures which formerly insured the growth of piety is one of the alarming evidences of the effectual spread of modern scepticism. The spirit of rationalism has set up new standards of Biblical interpretation which have lessened the sacred

and vital esteem for the Bible as the word of God. There are not wanting signs of a timidity in much of modern preaching which indicate an uncertainty of faith in the Bible as an infallible guide of conduct and a sure message of salvation. So much has been said about the folly of old faiths and so much sport has been made of the ways of our fathers that, silently, there has been allowed to slip away the foundations of an ardent faith. The bolder apostles of modern rationalism have graciously assumed the task of saving the Bible from a fatal defeat by proving its cause in the high courts of literary learning, forgetful of the fact that, as in the days of Saint Paul, not many of the noble have any sympathy with its messages of truth. Not a great amount of vital and vigorous preaching can be done out of a Bible that is only an ingenious compilation of pagan fables, nor will sensible people feel any deep obligation to confide their destiny to the shameful plagiarisms of unknown Jewish editors. A post mortem report of dead paganism will scarcely make a serious appeal to intelligent men as a fit ground upon which to risk an immortal destiny, and when one of the most notable defenders of reckless criticism, after having shifted from school to school of criticism, and from Church to Church in search of something steady to rest upon, turns at last to anchor his faith in papal infallibility, he shows at least that the conceits of learning cannot always mislead the consciences of men. The world will have nothing to do with a Bible upon which rests deep shadows of suspicions, and so long as learning insists upon writing interrogation points over every

page of the old book, and proving its inability to wipe any of them away, it need not be amazed that men will show little concern for such shadowy literature. A man cannot live a godly life upon wandering hypotheses, nor does he wish to die with his head pillowed upon a question mark.

The sense of lofty sanctity is severely shocked by the proposition to write a scientific life of Christ, one that will overthrow His divinity by investing Him with a miraculous genius for knitting together the ends of dying civilizations and ancient philosophies. The mythical Christ of Arnold and Bauer and Renan and Strauss may furnish literary entertainment to a few irreverent members of the academic circles, but He can be of no interest to that innumerable host of mankind, who groan beneath burdens of an actual world and who know by ten thousand awful experiences that sin is not a poet's dream, but that its terrible verity is attested throughout all the ages past by pains and sorrows and disasters and deaths. A mythical Christ might redeem from a mythical evil, but a dying humanity must have a real and a living Christ. Christianity will lose its only attraction to a despairing race when it is shown that Jesus is only in a figurative sense the Son of God, and the wide-spread tendency to divest Him of the majesty of His place in the godhead and grant Him no more than the place of the ideal man, is, doubtless, the source of a weakened faith in the Church, and the appalling indifference among men of the world. Let the pulpit bear upon its brow the radiant glory of a transfigured Lord, and show in its faith the authority of Him into whose hand

all power in heaven and earth has been given, then will the consciences of men awake out of their death-like slumber and the apostolic type of power will reappear among men. The only possible scientific life of Christ is a sanctified Church pouring out all its wealth of faith and energy for the establishment of His kingdom among men, and men who have not received the endowment of power at Jerusalem cannot be trusted to bear witness of Him "in all Judea and in Samaria and to the uttermost part of the earth."

The methods by which modern scepticism is diverting the minds of men from the supremacy of God and substituting an earthly seat of moral authority, show their efficiency in the halting and stumbling faith in prayer. Rationalists having demolished the foundations of a belief in the fellowship of men with God, have likewise pronounced prayer to be nothing more than a wholesome practice of devotional exercises. This is logically all that rationalists can make of prayer. To them it is a performance resulting in variable "subjective benefits." Sane men fail utterly to see that such results are of the least vital importance. If God be not within the hearing of man, if His mighty resources are not available in earth, if His concern for His creature does not enlist His active sympathies, then why should man be interested in the development of devotional qualities? As Pascal said of Decartes, the only God which modern rationalists admit, is a God who is utterly useless in the strains of human life. Bring the throne of God back within sight of men, let childhood feel that whispers of prayer on its lips can be heard by God, let the young

and the old know that they may take counsel with the Almighty, let every class and every condition of mankind understand that God today, as in days of Abraham and of Moses and of David, hears the cry of His creatures and answers their petitions out of His infinite fullness, and then will the souls of men turn unto our God. If these sentiments provoke a smile among those who think themselves too cultured to be ruled by such a primitive faith, let them be assured that a burdened soul going to its God is little concerned about the puny philosophies of prayerless men.

The liberty with which society estimates the value of moral conduct is but a natural consequence of the substitutes which rationalism has set up for the supremacy of God. Society turns with disgust and contempt away from the wretched woman who has blasted her virtue, and leaves her to pursue her dark way of desolation to its final horrors, but it welcomes to its confidence and its gilded circles the blasphemer, whose sickening profanity makes sport of all holy things in earth or sky. Theft disqualifies one for the high functions of government, but blasphemy and Sabbath desecration are no impediment to raising one to the highest office of state and nation. Such discreditable distinctions pervade the whole realm of social morals. From top to bottom there is a well established gradation of the values of evil. That such shameless liberty with truth and righteousness should breed a wide-spread laxity of conscience in social morals, surprises no sane man. The harvest of such sowing must be political perfidy, social apostasy, business trickery, domestic treachery, public scan-

dals and a scourge of inordinate greed. When Israel forgot the God who brought them up out of the land of Egypt and went after other gods, there came forth a flood of evils that deluged the nation with shame and despair. Hosea cried, "There is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land. By swearing, and lying, and killing, and stealing, and committing adultery, they break out, and blood toucheth blood." Let not a vain conceit lead men to think that ancient disasters are fenced out of this modern world by splendid advances in scholarship and the mighty achievements of science.

We need to be constantly reminded that moral distinctions arise out of the perfection of God's character and righteousness is obedience to His will. This is the only sound, ethical philosophy, and does not admit of grading evils to suit the revelries of human passions and the ends of human schemes. He who said, "Thou shalt not steal," also said, "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain." By what authority then, do men attach disgrace to theft, and no dishonor to blasphemy? Shall the irreverent soul that bedraggles the name of Almighty God and uses it to express the infamy of his own vile thoughts and purposes, stand in the sight of God as one a bit unfortunate in his habits of speech, while His judgments descend upon the flinching thief? When men find the seat of right in the will of God, when they come to understand that He judges not by the fickle whims of human greed, but by the eternal perfections of His own character, conscience will find a sure anchorage and the silly discussions

as to the greatness or smallness of evils will be at an end.

The tendency to eliminate God from the supreme place in human thought and conduct has secularized civil government and done infinite hurt to the civic conscience. "A government of the people, and by the people, and for the people," has become the popular creed of this American republic. Given emphatic currency by Mr. Lincoln in his famous address at Gettysburg, it has grown in popularity till now it seems almost to be an inspired declaration and an unpardonable profanity to question its truthfulness. Yet the doctrine of "a government of the people" is a horrible heresy, born in infidel France in the eighteenth century, and it inspired the riot and ravages of the mobs that turned the empire into a scene of insatiable anarchy. Already in this republic it has filled the voters with a conceit and the people with the notion of an omnipotence that makes them tamper with laws and civic institutions as unsanctified things, that a democratic form of government "by the people and for the people" is a wholesome doctrine to be fostered with zealous care. But from the logical consequences of a government of the people it behooves all lovers of order to earnestly pray and ceaselessly labor.

There are not wanting unerring signs that make the sober American citizen fear the outcome of present tendencies in this great republic. That every true American feels a worthy pride of his country and its vast resources of power, is easily apparent, but these resources cannot prevent the direful results of a falsehood that

may be embodied in the foundation of the nation. No other cardinal truth has been so overwhelmingly proved throughout the centuries by sad and infinite arguments as the truth, that stability and progress cannot be secured upon a false promise. And, certainly, nothing less than unpardonable vanity would lead Americans to attempt to carry through a proposition in the face of a record of universal defeat. Americans may do many wonderful things, but they can never make falsehood take the place of truth. Government must rest upon something far more stable than the will of the majority, even the will of the whole citizenship. Alexander Hamilton may have had too little faith in the judgment of the people, but certainly no man may be excused for a credulity that would substitute public sentiment in the place of God's will. The deification of the people is as idolatrous as the setting up of Aaron's calf. The only sound doctrine of government was stated by Saint Paul in his letter to the Romans, when he exhorted them: "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation." Civil government is of God, and civil laws are discoveries, not creations; they are just when they coincide with the will of God, not when they please the transient conveniences of the majority. Newton discovered gravity, he did not make it; Watts discovered the properties of steam, he did not create it; economists discovered the law of supply and demand, they did not ordain it; Moses

got the laws of Israel from God on the Mount, he did not construct them. God hath ordained all orders, whether they apply to governments or Churches or commerce or stars, and it is never the prerogative of the majority to change His orders. If moral supremacy be lodged within the will of the people, then why are not the wild acts of the mob lawful acts? Why was not the crazed cry, "Crucify Him," a righteous cry? Was it not the voice of the people? Already there are too many evidences that the masses in this republic are beginning to take seriously this extravagant flattery, far too recklessly dealt out by thoughtless politicians, whose sole aim is popular favor, even at the jeopardy of public safety.

Infinitely truer and sounder was the act of Columbus, who took this new-found world in the name of God and the faith of the Puritan Compact made in the cabin of the Mayflower, which began with the solemn words, "In the name of God." The first written constitution in America embodied this wholesome truth: "To maintain the peace and union of a people there should be an orderly and decent government established according to God;" and, "Unless the Lord build the house, they labor in vain who build it," were the words quoted by Franklin in the Constitutional Convention of 1787; while the Farewell Address of Washington gave supreme emphasis to the dependence of government, and especially this government, upon Almighty God. From these fundamental verities the growth of a reckless rationalism has swept this government into the turbulent seas of a boastful secularism, while civic senti-

ment looks with a patronizing pity upon religion as a human weakness to be tolerated but never consulted. How much of this forgetfulness of God can this land survive? Is it not full past the time when, in sack-cloth and ashes and deep contrition of heart, we should have turned away from the high places we have built and returned unto the God who brought our fathers up out of a horrible bondage and settled them in this good land of freedom?

It is said that the French sceptic, Laplace, declared that he could explain the phenomena of the universe without the hypothesis of God. And suppose, to the satisfaction of his own abnormal conceit, he had achieved his profane assertion, think you that a universe without a faith in God would be a better universe for the perfection of human and angelic life than a universe with a faith in God? Such a universe would be only an infinite stretch of desolation, shrouded in impenetrable blackness, through which all creatures would grope in endless despair. It is God and the knowledge of Him that fills all space with light and order and meaning. Upon Him the spirits of holy men in all generations have rested amid the rushing storms, and found in His providences an enduring refuge. Unto Him have childish lips, at the evening twilight, spoken their "Now I lay me down to sleep;" in the illumination of His spirit has youth been waked to see the glorious prospects of human service; upheld by the power of His presence, strong manhood has gone forth to its mightiest deeds; and His invisible presence has steadied tottering age with the assurances of an immortal glory. Vile, indeed,

is the spirit that would forever banish from the souls of men and women and children these deathless hopes and priceless faiths. How dare Israel put other gods in the place of Him who had brought them up out of the land of Egypt, and how dare we, inspired by the arrogance of learning and drunk on the vain glories of earthly philosophies, set up for ourselves gods of our imagination? He who made all things in heaven above and earth beneath, He who has guided the ways of men through all the ages, He who spoke to patriarchs and prophets in the olden times, He who showed the fullness of His love and the power of His redeeming grace in the sacrificial pains of His only begotten Son, He is God and beside Him there is none other; and unto Him let all the hosts in earth and all the hosts in heaven ascribe all praise and honor and glory forevermore.





REV. WALKER LEWIS, D.D.,
North Georgia Conference.

SERMON X.

THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD.

By REV WALKER LEWIS, D. D.

The Light of the World.

Text: "Then Jesus spake again unto them, saying: I am the Light of the World; he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." John 8: 12.

Whatever doubts the disciples may have had about Jesus, whatever doubts men may still have, He had none about Himself. He understood Himself as thoroughly as He knew that he was a man. He was not blind to any of His own endowments; and both His mission, His kingship and His nature, perfectly clear to His own insight, fell in occasional and startling utterances out of His consciousness, as His hearers needed, or as they could bear the weight of these awful truths.

"I am the Light of the World."

In harmony with the tremendous claim from apparently only a man of thirty years; without prestige of family, station or influence; just out of overalls and Nazareth, and not yet out of school because never in it: in exact accord with this fact, ineradicably rooted in His consciousness, John records the witness of the Baptist to His endowment with all Truth. "He was the true Light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world."

The mental operations of Jesus were infallible, because He "was Light, and in Him was no darkness at all."

His critics are tempted to relegate His claims for Himself out of court, and attribute their source to mental or moral aberration; but the spectrum analysis of the words that fell in flame from His lips gives up the secret of their august origin. He never needed the major or the minor premise of a syllogism. Every statement He made was conclusion; and men that despised His authority were still convinced that His teachings blazed and burnt from the photo sphere of the sun. Wild sayings are not infrequently spoken by the sane in the violent oscillation of emotions suddenly aroused; but there was judicial balance in even His unpremeditated utterances. The calculating, studied cunning of men never surprised Him, and, far from losing one of the many fights He waged over disadvantageous fields, He was never even embarrassed by the wiliest disputants and dialecticians. His counter attack upon foiled error was the rise of the sun upon a darkened continent; He submerged the under billows of brightness.

What says the caviller of His teachings? Was it possible for a bad man, or a mad man, or any man to teach what He taught, and as He taught? Was the sermon on the Mount the product of commonplace intelligence? Confessedly it has never been equalled, really never been closely approximated, by the most extraordinary intelligence of men. The imitative genius of man has challenged the parables to a contest of excellence, but only to go down in confessed defeat. Manufactured paste can never compete in lustre with the pure stone that holds the sun to its bosom. The truths He taught of God and man, in subject matter and splendor, excel all the teachings of the philosopher and the scientist. "Well, but

do not many of His sayings appear in the Old Testament, and in the teachings of the sages, and are not many of them therefore borrowed?" Borrowed? Certainly; but not by Him. Borrowed of Him. He is the Light of the World, and He alone lighteth every man that cometh into the world. There never has been even since His advent, and there never was discovered before it, by philosopher, sage or prophet, a single ray of truth that did not burn on the sacrificial altar at the gate of Paradise, or break from His white brow when He bent over the first sinners to say, "The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head." All the moral truths the world holds today, in whatever false or true religions and faiths it may have found lodgment and expression, is the communicated light of the Son of God. Congress of religions! Teachings of Confucius! Wisdom of prophets and philosophers! There is not in one of them a ray of light that did not first flash from the brow and bosom of the Son of God. Confucius, Socrates, Plato and Aristotle, scientists and philosophers, have brought us nothing true that is not second hand. If Jesus ever borrowed, He borrowed from Himself; and nothing He used was second hand, except as the hand that was torn received it from His own altars and revelation of earliest years.

The works of Christ did, not less than the facts He revealed, bear witness to the truth He claimed for Himself as the Light of the World. In passing to the relief of sick and disabled humanity, He did not grope in the dark of experiment, but came forth from the region of cloudless day to do immediately—because He perfectly understood how to do them—His works of cure and heal-

ing. His thorough knowledge of nature and law was the radiant "finger of God" which brought into instant use curative energies that so slowly move along the dim way of the scientific practitioners to build up human brokenness, and restore its wasted strength. True, skilled workmen of science are sent by Him to do the works He did; but even then they have such meager information of the laws of being as to be tedious and slow even when successful. Skill restores the blind after the patient treatment of months; He, in one hour, a few minutes, an instant. Skill cures fever by reducing its fire, and fighting it to exhaustion; He by an immediate counteractive. Skill toils for the crooked woman and, after years, leaves her no better; He laid His hands upon her, and—she was straight. Skill never goes after the maimed, or the dead for the one's recall and the other's restoration. At the gate of that solemn region, it confesses its impotence to save. Only the charlatanry of Christian Science, the lie and anti-Christ of the ages, professes to rescue there. But one touch can make the maimed whole; it's the touch of the torn hand. But one voice can reach the fugitives from the body in their distant realm; it's the voice of Christ. The baffled efforts or slow success of the human helper; and the invariable, instant cures He made have one explanation. He is the Light of the World; while the specialist at best has been able to store up in the walls of his brain only a few rays from the sun in the Heavens in whom, as the residuary of truth, "are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge."

More a great deal. Christ is the Life giving Light. "In Him was life: and the life was the light of men." The statement He made of the object of His mission—"I am

come that they might have life, and have it more abundantly," is amply proven by the facts of human experience. He has awakened the world. When He began to stir man's sodden brain out of its stupid sleep, He fired no signal gun, and set no alarm clock to rattle its noisy call. The sun was enough to awaken. Its transit of the horizon is not made, before the white messengers that proclaim its noiseless coming, touch the sleepers in bed or tree-top to awaking. History is witness to the fact, that the coming of Christ to any nation brings on its deeper awakening. Men find themselves in that light, and after that—progress! Discovery, invention, science, skill are the products of His light into man's activities. Civilization, like the flowers that imprison in their cells and petals the sun's glory, is man's appropriation of the world's luminary. It is the shadow of Christ's throne.

Deeper still, His white brow shines to an awakening of vaster amplitude and greater good, where the blinded sinner comes to see his unsuspected guilt. We find a striking instance of this power of Christ in the case of the mob and the sinful woman. These coarse fellows had come to Him, dragging a fallen soul to His feet for condemnation. They cared nothing for the law that she had broken. They wished to stone her, or to entangle Him in antagonism with Moses. Where was the sense of their own sin, in the use they were making of this poor woman? They may have been flattering themselves with the claim of virtuous conduct, and the expectation of reward for arresting the reign of law. They saw not deeper than the surface of their conduct, and knew nothing of the pus that burrowed in their souls, nothing at all of the putrid contents of their hearts over

which was drawn a veil of ignorance. The sight of their infamy moved Christ to shame. He slowly sunk to the earth in His intolerable embarrassment, and began to write in the sand. Oh, that those words had gone to record. How swiftly they were obliterated! Meanwhile, the rays of His holiness penetrated to the very soul of these professional saints, and, in one awful and universal illumination, exposed to each man's sight the burrowed hell within—his unholy desires and covered guilt. They sneaked away from His presence. They could not endure the uncovering of their infiltrated decay. It was the transit of Jesus over the swill trough that brought the Prodigal to himself and his father's house. "The things" of Christ are the Spirit's torch; and with that, He discovers to the self-satisfied their unsuspected guilt, "For the Word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in His sight; but all things are naked and open unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do."

There is a higher region where the Light of the World shines, and gives the life needed relief from entangling association and earthly things. Not long since I visited a specialist at his office. A very large but handsome woman was leaving as I entered. "Did you see her?" Of course I did. She was of enormous size, and I couldn't overlook her. At once I thought of Sidney Smith's English woman, whom he pronounced "a mob, an unlawful assemblage, around whom the riot act should be read and command made for her to disperse."

"Well," said the specialist, "she is being treated by the Violet ray. She has lost seventy pounds in fourteen sittings. But it is only the unhealthy, fatty tissue that she is losing." As I looked inquiringly, he said further: "She sits in that cabinet, and I immerse her in a bath of the violet rays. These have a penchant energy of nine inches, and, while they are tonic and helpful to the healthy tissue, they rapidly break down and expel the other kind." Exactly this is done for the soul by Christ. Light that lighteth every man who cometh into the world, its penetrant activity, not limited but piercing to the uttermost, breaks down and expels the coarse and the sensual; and, disentangling the angel in man from the dog, gives the true life wider reaches and nobler experiences. It may lessen its bulk, but it improves its quality. It frees the gold from the embrace of dirt, and puts upon it the image and superscription of the king, and gives it both circulation and unchallenged value in the kingdom of grace and glory.

The life giving light appears again in the creation of life, by its energy of action.

Walking along the lake in City Park, Little Rock, last year, I was charmed to see the surface of the water decked with water lilies that lay like a thousand stars upon its bosom. These lovely flowers, in their bloom and glory, had just been called into being by the sun as it had beat down over the ooze beds in its passage over the park, and had touched each tiniest cell in its sleep and had called it by name and had lifted its quickened head until it lay upon the lake as sweet and bright as the smile of God.

Like that, our Lord comes down upon earth's sterile marshes where He cleaves the barriers of night with

His radiant presence. The light that beams from His brow, with every heartbeat, breaks in billows over the world and communicates the power of life to human lifelessness and decay. Its penetrant energy reaches the depths, and awakens the germs that await its call to activity. It is a long way the lilies must climb out of their mud bottom hiding into the balm of heaven; but the light that gives life, also gives help and lifts them until they fall in showers of radiance upon the surface of the earth. Every virtue that supplants a vice; every grace that comes to holiest expression; each divine quality of love to cover a multitude of sins; each generous faith that thinketh no evil; each trace of the Father's image and likeness in unselfish work and sacrifice, is one of the flowers that spring and bloom along the path of the Lord. The saints are the dust of His feet.

Light of the World! Light of life! Only such as refuse to follow thee can stay in darkness. Whoever refuses that, and relegates Him out of human affairs despises his own life, and quenches the only hope. It is not strange that Haeckel at the end of his Christless philosophic research should have confessed his perplexity and discontent in the very title of his last and most infernal book, "The Riddle of the Universe." Riddle all things are without Christ. The earth itself is without form and void and darkness is upon the face of the deep.

Not so at all are they that trust Him. Among all the happy multitudes not a single dissonant voice challenges the promise, "He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness." At last the earth rises out of its dull sleep to hear the watchman cry: "The morning cometh!" It has

already come. For He is here, and where He is, it's day. He touches nothing that He doesn't brighten. He enters a home and it becomes a temple. He sits beside the sick, and the groans of weakness sink into the undertone of rapturous praise. He visits blindness, and Paradise Lost escapes from the night in literary splendor. He enters the dungeon where the prisoner of conscience was immersed, and Pilgrim's Progress opens the way to immortality and heaven. He consecrates toil, and once despised overalls are of richer texture than is king's purple. Is the world in horror and doubt about evil? His manger, ministry and cross are a full theodicy. Simultaneous with the advent of the Babe, the angels made the sky ring with the song of peace and good will; and on His shoulder, come long ago to masterful strength, the government rests. And finally, over a world perplexed and weary with its burdens and cares; uncertain of everything in the cemetery but graves and heartaches aghast at the black interrogation point after death, the Father bends each day with the cheering words, "This is my Beloved Son! Hear Him!"





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SERMON XI.

THE GOOD SAMARITAN IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY.

By REV. SETH WARD, D. D.

The Good Samaritan in the Twentieth Century.

Text: "Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbor to him that fell among thieves? And he said, He that shewed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise." Luke 10:36, 37.

The parable of the Good Samaritan commends itself to the conscience of the world. The simple and beautiful story told by the Master touches a responsive chord in the universal heart. However much we may fall short of the practice it enjoins, the better nature within us instinctively pays tribute to the principle it illustrates. The setting of the story is oriental and primitive; its spirit belongs to all climes and to all centuries. A wounded man, suffering, ready to die, neglected by his own countrymen and co-religionists, was generously succored by one of another race and of an alien faith, one who was separated from the sufferer by the highest barriers of social prejudice and by the deepest gulfs of racial antagonism. But sympathy found itself in the presence of need, and only one thing could follow, that was help. Men may be indifferent, or even antagonistic to Christianity in the abstract, they may object to our

statements of doctrine and to our forms of worship, but I challenge any man in whose bosom there throbs a human heart to object to the conduct of this Samaritan. You will observe that Jesus did not call this man "good." He only outlined the picture by a few masterly strokes, giving to it the form and glow of life, and for nearly nineteen centuries men have been looking on that picture and talking about "the Good Samaritan." And yet that is only an illustration of the Christian spirit in social life. It is Christ's ideal of man's attitude and action toward his fellowman. It is human brotherhood in the concrete, a practical expression of the religion that Jesus taught and lived.

I wish to base all that I shall say in this discussion on the truth so vividly and so beautifully illustrated in this parable, a truth that may be expressed in a single statement: The needs of our fellowmen constitute their strongest claim upon us for sympathy and for help. The truth of this proposition is so apparent that neither evidence nor argument is needed in its support. I offer none. If any man commends the conduct of the Priest and the Levite rather than that of the Samaritan, for that man I have no message today.

Not men's wants, but their needs, constitute their claim upon us, and the deeper and more urgent the need the stronger and more solemn the obligation resting upon us to render to them such service as is in our power. More and more this truth is being seen and felt. There was a time when, apparently, men thought they could be Christians and remain indifferent to the needs of their fellows—they thought they could serve

God and neglect man—but that day is forever past. The Priest and the Levite pilloried in this parable for more than eighteen centuries, objects of the world's contempt and scorn, remind us that no pious professions, no discharge of merely ecclesiastical functions, will be tolerated as a substitute for service to our brother in need. A sympathetic heart is more orthodox than all the creeds, and a helping hand is more religious than all the rites of sacredotalism. Creeds and rites have their place and their value, not for a single moment would I disparage them, but Paul recognized charity as the greatest of all virtues, and Paul's Master, and ours, taught that love is God's supreme law and man's highest duty. Religion—the Christian religion—is love, and love serves. Love gives itself. Witness Calvary.

But let us consider the breadth of this principle. How far will the spirit of the Good Samaritan reach? Where will the limits of love be found? A cry of distress, a call for help, coming from my neighbor's house or from the adjoining street, does not need to be reinforced by arguments. The note of appeal is more potent than all logic, and the heart leaps to give relief before the mind weighs the consequence of such conduct. Now, how far away must a needy man be in order to release me from the obligation to give him help? If I am under bonds to the man across the street, then why not to the man across the state, or across the sea? Sympathy is not bounded by space. Distance may limit my opportunities to serve, but can interpose no barrier to love. But perchance the needy man doesn't think as I think, doesn't believe as I be-

lieve; he may differ from me on questions of politics and on matters of faith. Will that absolve me from my duty to give him such relief as is in my power? Certainly not. But, suppose once again, that the needy man is not of my complexion, suppose he is lighter than I am, or darker than I am. Will that justify my indifference to his sufferings? The question seems absurd. Only one answer is possible. But we do well to ask the question that the inevitable answer may be all the more apparent. No distance, no divergence of creed, no difference of complexion or of physical feature, can absolve me from my duty to help the man who needs the service that I can give. Our brother's need should be the one condition of our sympathy and the all-sufficient plea for our help. "As we have opportunity, let us do good unto all men." "The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many." "Now if any man have not the spirit of Christ he is none of His."

The object of the world's most urgent need is the religion of Jesus Christ, the faith of the gospel of the Son of God.

Let us examine that statement with some care. It involves far more than can be considered in a single sermon, but we can at least see with clearer eye its absolute truth and get some larger view of its far-reaching significance.

I. The Christian religion ministers to man's social, industrial and intellectual well-being. "Godliness has promise of the life that now is," as well as of "that which is to come." In carrying the gospel to non-

Christian nations we do not go, primarily, to civilize them, but with the gospel we carry to them all that is purest, most helpful and most enduring in our Christian civilization. Knowledge of the value of the individual life, the doctrine of human brotherhood, the supremacy of righteousness, the divinity of love, the Fatherhood of God; these are the invaluable elements of our civilization, and these are essentially Christian. The centuries have demonstrated that the religion of Jesus Christ is the one sovereign remedy for poverty, ignorance, superstition and the manifold ills that afflict the life of man in this world. True, the remedy has not yet been wholly effective in our own land, but it is equally true that the remedy has not been fully and faithfully applied in our own land. It is indisputably true that where the teachings and spirit of Christianity most fully prevail, there the conditions of human life are most favorable, and most favorable because of the prevalence of Christianity. We have poverty at home, but it is not to be compared with the pitiable squalor that afflicts the people of the far East. In India the average annual income is ten dollars per capita. A laboring man's wage is one dollar and fifty cents per month. In 1894 the Indian National Congress reported that fifty millions of people were dragging out a miserable existence, and that multitudes perished annually from starvation. It is said that in China, a country of great natural resources, the average wage of a working man is three dollars per month. On that pittance they exist, they can hardly be said to live. The United States, Germany, Great Britain and Canada, with less

than two hundred million population, have far greater national revenues than all non-Christian nations, though these latter have not less than eight hundred million population. Give to the poverty-stricken multitudes of Asia Christian faith and Christian civilization, the institutions and influences that uplift and enrich our lives, and the productive power of the individual will be multiplied, the channels of commerce will be opened, the volume of wealth will be increased and the horizon of life will be enlarged. The blight of ignorance is also upon the East. Education is limited, both in its subject matter and in the number of persons to whom it is accessible. In India less than one per cent of the women have the simplest elements of an education. In China about one per cent of the women can read. The popular idea is expressed in a Chinese proverb which says, "Educating a woman is like putting a knife in the hands of a monkey." When Christianity entered China there was not one school in all that vast empire open for the education of woman. The Hon. Charles Denby, recently deceased, who for years was United States Minister to China, is authority for the statement that domestic slavery prevails in China, and that woman is the principal victim. Tens of thousands of lives are lost annually and untold suffering is endured only because the people are ignorant of the simplest principles of medical science. Womanhood is degraded. It is said that there are in India twenty millions of widows—two millions of them mere children—and in India widowhood means degradation and suffering. Home life, in the purity and blessedness known to us, is unknown in non-

Christian lands. The need of the world, even from the point of view of social and economic life, is unspeakable. Poverty, ignorance, superstition, quackery, governmental oppression, are fearfully prevalent, blighting the lives of individuals and checking the progress of nations. Will you think for a moment of the waste of human life in the world? Of the men and women and children who ought to be, and who might be, pure, strong, happy and useful, but whose lives are going to waste day by day? They live in the darkness of ignorance, in the pinched and narrow ways of poverty, under the blight of superstition and sin, all unconscious of the glorious life of freedom and peace and joy that God would give to all His children. Oh, the pity of such waste. Often the question springs to our lips, Why does God allow such conditions? and the question often remains unanswered. But there is another question that ought to come to us over and over again, one that ought to burn itself into the conscience of every Christian man and woman. Why do we allow such conditions to continue? The Church of God can change them in great measure if she will. A suffering world, whose very suffering is a cry, makes mute but piteous appeal to us for help. Can we be indifferent to this cry and be worthy to call ourselves disciples of the Christ? But, much as we deplore the slowness of God's people to hear and heed the cry of a needy world, this must in truth be said: The missionary work of the Christian Church is the only effort that is being made to carry help to those needy multitudes—to give larger opportunities of life to a darkened and blighted world. Com-

merce is penetrating the remotest corners of the earth, and commerce bestows benefits, but those benefits are incidental and are not unmixed with evils. Commerce goes for gain. In the nature of things it could not be otherwise. "The open door" in the East, for which our statesmen are contending, is, first of all, for profit. An observant writer has said, "Whether, apart from missions, the West is doing the East more good than harm, is at least an open question." Only Christianity goes to serve. Only Christianity establishes schools, builds hospitals, founds asylums and goes into the darkened homes of paganism to speak the word of peace and teach the way of life. The man who, moved by pity for his brothers would help forward the movement for a better world and a happier humanity, must aid the work of foreign missions now carried on by the Christian Churches. Nobody else is trying to do this work.

II. But the Christian religion is man's greatest need. Most of all, because it meets in fullest measure the wants of his spiritual nature. Man, the moral and immortal spirit, is vastly more than man the merely social and intellectual being. Sin is the world's greatest evil. Salvation is the world's greatest need. Sin is worse than ignorance or poverty or political oppression or any sort of social evil. It is sin that dwarfs the spirit, blights the character, wrecks the home, degrades the nation and ruins the individual here and hereafter. "In every land man is moral and mortal, he is sinning and dying," and needs first of all and most of all salvation from sin, cleansing from its guilt, freedom from its power and the blessed assurance of eternal life. The

gospel of Jesus Christ is the means by which men are saved from sin. Divine grace is the sovereign remedy for moral evil. We know that to be true. Its sufficiency has been demonstrated through all the centuries of Christian history and the trophies of its redeeming power are found today in all the nations of the earth. And only the gospel saves. I do not mean to assert that the multitudes who have not heard our gospel are necessarily under condemnation. That were to inflict on them penalties due to our negligence. "The Judge of all the earth will do right." Their eternal destiny is in His hands. But in this world God saves men only by the power of the gospel. Purity of life, tenderness of spirit, all-embracing charity, moral strength sufficient to resist the evil influences that are in the world, the uplift and outlook that come from a great faith in a great God—these are features, elements, of a saved life, in this world, and these belong only to the man who receives the truth, the faith, the spirit of Jesus Christ. We are in great danger of losing sight of man's essential nature, of sin's deadly character, and therefore of the gospel's supreme value. That insidious materialism that magnifies the physical man at the expense of the spiritual is the most subtle and dangerous antagonist of our faith in this day. A distinguished citizen of our Southland publicly announced a few years ago that he would give liberally to the charities of his own town, but would contribute not one dollar for foreign missions. The United States expended hundreds of millions of dollars and jeopardized the lives of thousands of her sons for the political freedom of Cuba, but it is with

difficulty that a few thousand dollars and a few dozen men are secured for the evangelization of Cuba. Christian nations sent more men to China in the summer of 1900 to rescue the Europeans and Americans besieged in Pekin than all Christendom has sent for the evangelization of that empire in a hundred years. I am persuaded that in the average Christian Church today we could raise more money to feed hungry men than we could to save sinful men. God forbid that we should care less for the bodies of our brothers, that we should have less of sympathy for their hunger and their oppression, but is it possible that we are losing sight of the higher and more important truth that "the life is more than meat," and that "man cannot live by bread alone?" It is less than true philanthropy, certainly it is less than true Christianity, to care for men's bodies and neglect their spirits—to relieve the needs of an hour and forget the interests that are eternal.

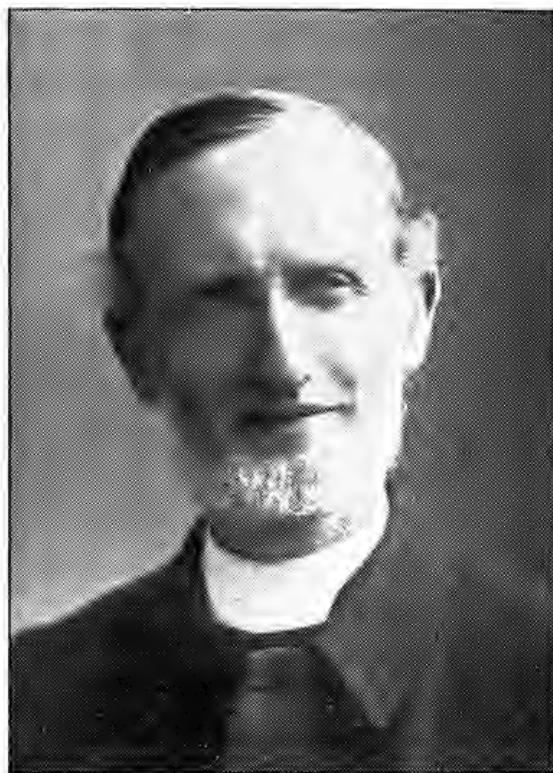
But it is sometimes objected that the peoples to whom we send missionaries have their religions, they are satisfied, why disturb their faith to give them ours? First of all, most of all, because ours is true. In Jesus Christ God has given to the world the highest, fullest revelation of truth and life. He is "the Way, the Truth, the Life." If any man doubts at this vital point he will probably object to foreign missions. Doubt at this point, conscious or unconscious, is at the bottom of many of the objections urged against this enterprise of the Church. But as a matter of fact we are not leaving non-Christian peoples in the undisturbed possession of their religious beliefs. They are being under-

mined and destroyed, not only by the missionary work of the Christian Churches, but by all the outgoing forces of our modern life. Ethnic faiths can neither evade nor survive contact with twentieth century civilization. Witness Japan, where the old faiths are being supplanted by various forms of modern doubt. Witness Latin America, where the grosser forms of Catholicism are being abandoned as enlightenment increases, but only, in too many instances, to be followed by so-called "liberalism" and other forms of unbelief. R. A. Hume, in a recent work on missions, tells us that a Hindu leader, as he contemplated the condition of his people, said: "There is no more tragic event under the sun than the death of a nation, and this consists in the destruction of peoples and institutions and national peculiarities that give it an individual character. This awful tragedy is now going on in India. The old religion is dying, the old morality is dying, the bonds of custom and tradition, which are the bones and sinews of the social organism, are dissolving; there is death and decomposition everywhere!" It is idle, worse than idle, to talk about leaving non-Christian nations in undisturbed possession of their religious beliefs. All systems of faith, Christianity not excepted, are being tested to the utmost. Only the truth that is in them will survive. The hoary religions of the East, with all their poetic beauty, with all their moral failure, are doomed. They may linger in some form for a time yet, but in the end they must die. The world must ultimately be Christian in its faith, or come to an age when all faith shall perish in the heart of our race. A faithless world! Appalling thought!

The very suggestion chills the soul. And yet the irresistible logic of facts drives us to the conclusion that only the gospel of our Lord can save our posterity from such fate. This brings us to see the deepest, darkest depths of the world's need. Not only must Christ save the individual soul from sin and give to it the strength and beauty of righteousness; He must save the world from the unspeakable doom of a faithless and Godless future.

Paul stood one day beside the Egean sea and heard the cry of a man in need—the appeal of the man from Macedonia—and at once the great-souled apostle concluded that the Lord had called him to preach the gospel in Europe. It was a man's appeal for help, but it was God's call to service. That call comes to us today. It rings out from every dark place in the home land; it sweeps in mighty volume across the seas. God's call coming in thunder notes from the blazing skies—such a call as came to Saul—might be misunderstood by us; we cannot misunderstand the call that comes in the cry of a needy world. It is a brother's plea for help, but it is God's call to service.





REV. W. L. WATKINSON, D.D.,
Of the British Wesleyan Methodist Church.

SERMON XII.

THE INSPIRATION OF THE MASTER'S CONFIDENCE.

Missionary Sermon Preached Before the
Autumn Assembly of the Baptist Union
of Great Britain and Ireland, at Northamp-
ton, on October 4. : : : : : : : :

By REV W L. WATKINSON.

A Timely Statement.

While the missionary spirit is so manifestly growing among the Georgia Methodists, the Wesleyan is anxious to do its part in bringing the heart of the Church at home in fullest sympathy with the lost millions abroad.

We, therefore, take from The Methodist Recorder of recent date, the following strong and comforting statements of truth as given forth by Dr. W. L. Watkinson of the British Wesleyan Methodist Church.

Our readers will appreciate the clear setting forth of this great theme by so distinguished a minister.

The Inspiration of the Master's Confidence.

"He shall not fail nor be discouraged till He have set judgment in the earth, and the isles shall wait for His law." Isaiah 42:4.

"The servant of Jehovah," He in whom the spirit of righteous Israel found full and final revelation, even our Lord Jesus Christ, appears in this passage full of serene confidence in the ultimate success of His sublime mission. "He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause His voice to be heard in the street;" His manner of appearing will be humble, He will carry out His mission without demonstration, but He is sure of Himself and of His work. His zeal will never be extinguished, nothing shall break His strength until He has carried truth and right to their fullest efficacy, universality, and permanence. Today it can only be good to look into the calm face of our Master, and to catch, if it may be, the infection of His glorious confidence. For, alas, from various causes we are apt to be discouraged. Many things are against us, the triumph of our cause is long delayed, and if faith does not fail, our enthusiasm is often chilled. Other platforms are broken up, other causes prevail, but the missionary platform continues from generation to generation, the great scheme remains unaccomplished, and very often the end we propose seems as far off as

ever. Let us then try to understand somewhat of the real nature of our discouragements; let us seek fellowship with our undaunted Lord, and may He pour His faith and zeal into our fainting heart!

I. The Discouragements which Arise in Evangelical Service.

1. The aspects of spiritual work are often such as to make it difficult to believe in any real and orderly progress. Viewing the world at large, it is often difficult to see in its events any distinct tendency, any harmonious working, any real progress to an assignable result. As some one has said, "Life never seems to satisfy the artistic sense." It appears at best rough-hewn, shapeless, incomplete, disappointing—it is apparently full of confusion, contradiction, and ends without being finished! And just as the personal life never satisfies the artistic sense, history never satisfies the dramatic sense, or if it occasionally does it seems an accident. This aspect of nature and life leads many to deny altogether the government of God; they hold the irrationality and purposelessness of all things and events. Now in spiritual work faith is subject to exactly the same trial. How many of our efforts fall out awkwardly, unhappily, unsuccessfully! We identify the Church of God with the Kingdom of God, which implies that it is a sphere of law, order, and evolution, but the phenomena of the Church are often just as chequered and perplexing as the phenomena of the world. Things fall out apparently arbitrarily, confusedly, abortively. How rarely does evangelical work satisfy the artistic sense, the dramatic,

the scientific sense! And because of this we are apt to lose confidence in the shaping Hand, the guiding Spirit. But surely we ought not to suffer ourselves to be thus confounded. However in the world at large things may wear the aspect of caprice and aimlessness, deep thinkers realize the prevalence of coherence, law, and advancement. The evolutionist protests that he discovers in nature a definable beginning, leading to a definable end, and the philosophical historian demonstrates the connection and progress of events. Under the general aspect of accident and caprice in nature and life we perceive a designing, directing, perfecting Spirit. And having thus found God in the world, cannot we believe that within apparent chaos He guides His Church? Whenever we falter because the development of our spiritual enterprise shocks our artistic, dramatic or logical sense, let us look away from the local, the immediate, the sectional, and take larger views. Christ is calm because He takes the wider view, and knows how the partial discord is lost in the larger music. "Verily Thou art a God that hidest Thyself, O God of Israel, the Savior;" but within the shadow He sweetly and effectually bends all things to His sovereign will. Despite appearances, Christ walks amid the golden candlesticks. He rules in His Church, harmonizing all contradictions, and compelling all events to the sublime issue of universal truth and righteousness.

2. The presence and working of the kingdom of God are largely observed by its worldly accompaniments, and this is a trial to faith. We believe that the main motive of history is spiritual, but how little does this appear to the carnal eye! How entirely is the Kingdom of God

hidden by the kingdoms of this world! Take the morning paper which mirrors the current world, and this fact is obvious enough. Parliaments, palaces, exchanges, garrisons, navies, crimes, carnivals, science, art, literature, storms, earthquakes, famines, and a thousand other sensational things and events strike the eye and impress the imagination, but we hardly get a glimpse of that kingdom of God which is the core of all things, the secret of history, the goal of the ages. Our mind and imagination are filled with the shapes, movements, colors and voices of the world whose fashion passes away. The spiritual significance of contemporary history is hidden, except to the reflective and devout mind. We see the wires, but not the message they flash; the body, but not the soul which actuates it; the mechanism, but not the spirit in the midst of the wheels; the scaffolding, but not the shrine which rises within it. The personages, occurrences and movements chronicled in the morning journal are mediums, agents and instruments of the Kingdom of God, but they nevertheless hide the Kingdom they unconsciously introduce and establish. And this, I say, is a trial to faith. We become down-hearted because our work is so little in evidence. The imagination of the nations is filled with the Russian and Japanese struggle, but they hardly get a glimpse of the sublime struggle of good with evil, of truth with error, of Zion with Babylon, of the City of God with the strongholds of sin. We are ready to think that there is no Kingdom of God, or that it is strangely insignificant and inaggressive. Yet let us be reassured. Our Master told us that it would be so. "The Kingdom of God cometh not with observation." It belongs wholly to the invisible, the silent, the

imperceptible, the inscrutable. But none the less it comes. The unseen dominates the visible, the still small voice is more than all trumpets and drums, and the inscrutable movements that are so difficult to verify in inevitably work the salvation and sanctification of the race. "He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause His voice to be heard in the street," yet He works like the impalpable, imponderable forces of nature; and the kingdoms of this world, and their glory, shall become the Kingdom of God and of His Christ.

3. The meager result of spiritual work is another source of disheartenment. The teacher, the pastor, the missionary, often feels this, and our heart is well-nigh broken. But again we are in the wrong. During my recent visit to Johannesburg I spent a day at one of the gold mines. I saw immense activity, gangs of workers, clouds of dust, hissing steam, smoke of chimneys, deafening stamps, torrents of water, cauldrons of slime, and I did not see a single particle of gold. The engineer touched some slime and said, "There is a grain," but to me it was as invisible as gold usually is on the collection plate; and I came away with an inclination to suspect the thing of being a fraud, for had I not seen the whole process and not a glimmer of gold! But when my journey was done, and the ship anchored at Southampton, boxes of gold dust were discharged by us to the tune of millions. So today our Evangelical work proceeds, and there is great noise of machinery, much smoke and stir, much that is trivial and vulgar to the carnal eye, yet the effect is dubious indeed. The globe-trotter visits the Mission station, and complains that he sees no gold, and the missionary sadly confesses that he sees little;

and at home we toil much and long with pathetic, disappointing results; but when we land on the other side, be sure we shall see more talents of the fine gold of the sanctuary than we can possibly number, carried with songs and shoutings into the treasury of the King. We may remember, too, it often occurs that the richer the quartz brought to the mills, the more invisible the gold; and the more unpromising our evangelic labor the more precious it may prove. Let us be of good courage. Our Master knew what it was to weep over unsuccessful work; at the funeral of Jerusalem He was the chief mourner, and yet He does not fail, neither is He discouraged; we cannot work in vain, the gold which escapes us here shall come to light, sowing in tears we shall reap in joy.

4. The slow progress of the cause of Christ among the nations is another stock source of despondency. This is, perhaps, putting the same thing that we have already spoken of in another light, but in this particular shape the difficulty often perplexes us. We are distressed by failures and delays. Our work starts in poetry and ends in prose, and after years it looks as if little or nothing had been gained. But we ought to know better than this. It may easily be that we fail to appreciate the growth of the spiritual realm. If we had lived on this earth from the very beginning, we should have thought that it was standing still, that no development whatever was going on in it, so minute and imperceptible is the action of Nature, but if we recall the geological period when there was not a flower or bird on the whole globe, and compare with that barren epoch our glorious summer, it is manifest that the unfolding of the world

has been going on. It is the same with the history of civilization. If we could have lived through the long ages since man first appeared on the earth, we should have thought him ever standing still, so gradual and insignificant have been the successive changes and transformations he has undergone; but if we now look at the flint instruments, the crude vessels, the grotesque decorations, rescued from a primitive kitchen-midden, and compare these with the splendid treasures of some international exhibition, the progress is indisputable. So with the spiritual development of the world; it slowly silently grows, although it seems to stand still, or even recede. He who is the same today yesterday and forever is not disheartened, His zeal does not abate, and we may take our stand by His side in calmness and confidence. "He shall see of the travail of His soul and shall be satisfied."

II. The Grounds for an Absolute Confidence in the Ultimate Triumph of the Faith of Christ.

I will notice the two grand justifications of our faith which are suggested by the text.

1. The fitness of the Gospel for the world's need. "The isles wait for His law" They need the truth as it is in Jesus they have an instinct for it they wait sympathetically, longingly. The cry for redemption runs through the whole human race, and only Christ can satisfy that cry. The soul of man in its sin and sorrow, its strength and weakness, its hope and fear, responds to the great evangelic doctrines. The scientist tells us that when the Church bells ring, every particle

of matter in the city responds to the music. As the clang bursts through the air, as the chimes fall in sweetness on the ear, as the musical notes of psalm or hymn flow out from the steeple, every atom within reach of the sound executes harmonic motions corresponding to those of the bells. The bricks in the walls resolve themselves into groups of dancers. Blocks of granite are charmed, and every particle of which they are composed delightfully agitated. The very stones of the street feel the vibration and respond to the solemn or joyful peal. And it is thus with the soul of men when the music of Christ's name is sounded forth. The conscience responds to His ethical appeal; the heart is strangely warmed by His love; the will is conscious of a delightful quickening. And just as the most unlikely material of the city dances to the music of the bells, so the most abnormal consciences, understandings, wills, respond to the doctrines of grace, and awake to a new life of liberty, gladness and hope. If our message evoked no response it would be another thing, if it made no impression, if it elicited no sympathy; but it does reach men; and the most unlikely are moved, melted, mastered. The grandest doctrine proves that it is such by the way in which it reaches the lowliest hearts; and it proves itself also by the vastness of the area over which it avails. "His sound has gone forth through all the earth, and His words to the end of the world." And men of every nation and tribe have heard, understood, lived, because they recognized in His voice the music of heaven, the message of the righteous and redeeming God.

2. The efficacy of the grace and power of the Gospel is the other truth suggested by the text, "A bruised reed

shall He not break and the smoking flax shall He not quench." The religious instinct in men and nations is half-broken, as a bruised reed; the religious element burns feebly, like the nearly extinguished flax; their life is hanging by a slender thread; but Christ shall deal so compassionately, so tenderly, that out of the most doubtful religious instincts, out of the frailest beginnings and elements, He shall bring forth the grandest characters and civilizations. The meekness and gentleness of Christ are precious elements; it is by this that He captivates a world of sinners; it is by this gentleness that He makes us great. And there is not only grace but power. "He shall bring forth judgment in truth," or, as quoted in New Testament, "Until He sends forth truth unto victory." That is, He not only gives the right doctrine, He makes it prevail. And how true this is, is attested by ever-growing history and experience. Renan, writing about Sinai, likens its glory to "a kind of aurora borealis," and speaks of the giving of the law as "a grandiose legend which swelled like a soap bubble, all the more brilliant and colored because it was empty." But, surely, the law of Sinai has not proved an aurora borealis! The cold brilliance of the aurora never gilded corn, painted flowers, or ripened clusters; but the law of Sinai has been a supreme fact in the moral history of the race. The Psalmist got much nearer the truth when he compared the law to the going forth of the sun —enlightening, restoring, converting, beautifying. And the energy and efficacy of the law have been completed in the redeeming truth of Christ. In the Greek legend Aurora sets out before the sun, and is the forerunner of his rising; and in this sense the glory of Sinai was an

auroreal light, for it anticipated One mighty to save. "The law came by Moses, but grace and truth by Jesus Christ." And today the faith of Christ is the one saving, converting, transfiguring energy. We have foreign faiths and pretentious philosophies, but the truth of Christ is the unique saving power. Acetylene gas is said to be similar in its quality to sunlight, and recently some plants were exhibited that had never seen the sun. Very interesting, no doubt, but it will be some time before fruit is sent to the market ripened by acetylene gas. The sun has no serious competitor, neither has Christ. He is, and must remain, the hope of the race. He alone has the words of eternal life. Here, then, are the two grand considerations which justify the utmost confidence and expectation in our evangelistic work. Christ wants the world, for He has redeemed it; it is the solemn duty and glorious privilege of the Church to bring the two together. The world wants Christ, for He alone can save it.

Let us rise up again strong in faith and joyful through hope. One of our free-thinking writers tells us to put our shoulder to the wheel, and try to make the world better; but to save disappointment, we must put the book of Ecclesiastes under our arm. All I have to say is, that if any man is going to put the book of Ecclesiastes under his arm when he puts his shoulder to the wheel, that wheel is not likely to spin dangerously, neither will that workman be worth a living wage. If the lift of your shoulder is to count for anything, you must put the book of the Revelation under your arm; hope, glorious hope in Christ, must be our inspiration, not doubt and despair, and our victory is sure, and it shall be overwhelming.



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MANAGER.